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BURR'S CONSPIRACY

EXPOSED ;

AND

GENERAL WILKINSON

VINDICATED

AGAINST THE SLANDERS OF HIS ENEMIES

ON THAT

IMPORTANT OCCASION.

1811.

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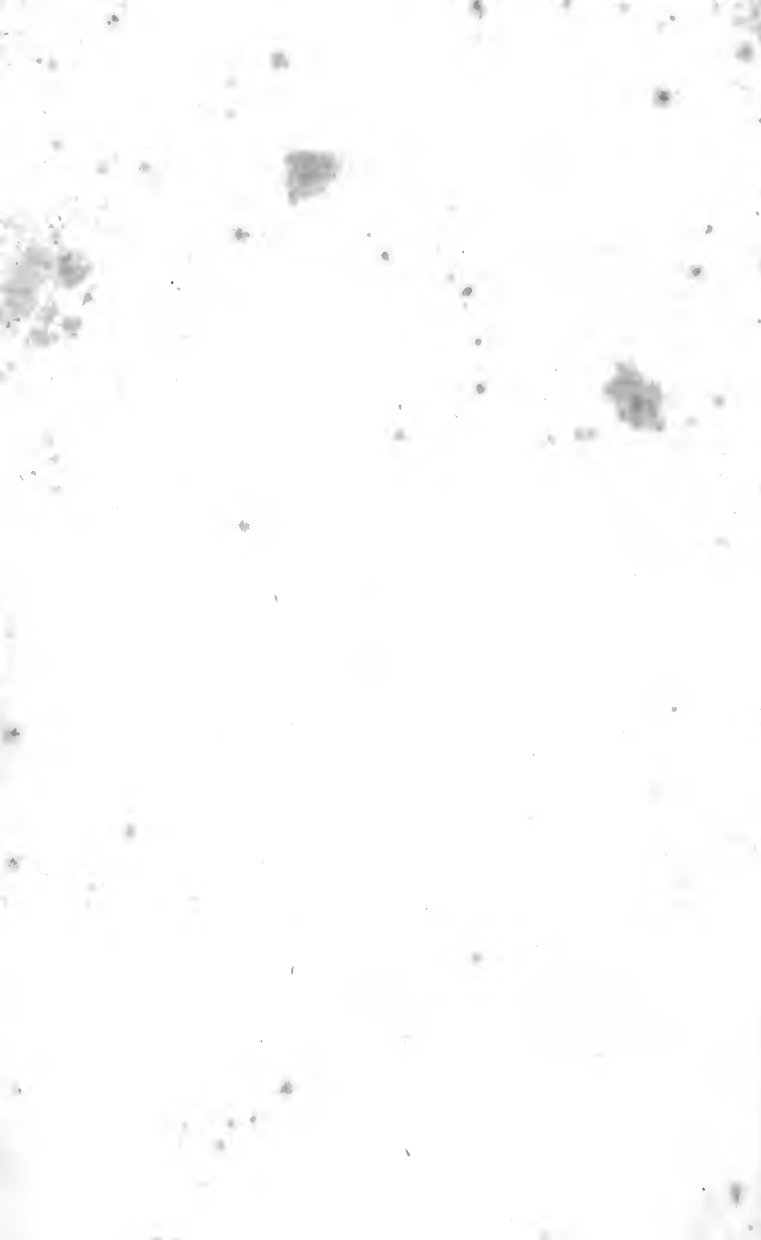
ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was general Wilkinson's intention, when he commenced his memoirs, to have offered the humble performance to his country, in regular progression, from his birth to the closing scene of his persecutions ; and he had actually brought down the first volume to the period of the convention of Saratoga, when he discovered it was necessary he should abandon the course he had marked out for himself, to meet the torrent of vilification which continued to bear against him, and prepare to combat the prejudices of the House of Representatives of the eleventh congress. Pursuant to those objects, he prepared this volume, and in an Appendix to the fourth, arranged ample proofs to justify his conduct in command on the Mississippi in the year 1809, from whence he had been recalled under circumstances of disgrace, without a trial, or an opportunity to vindicate himself, although it was earnestly solicited, even before his recall. The preliminary matter to this Appendix which is now in the press, will shortly be offered to the public, and will be followed soon after by an ample exposition of the imputed Spanish conspiracy and its foul ramifications. The memoirs, then, of general Wilkinson's public and private life, will be the last volume published ; and will comprehend many incidents and anecdotes of the revolution little known, with a more interesting and authentic account of the battle of Breed's hill, the siege of Boston and the campaigns of 1776 and 7, than is extant.

Persecuted to the verge of destruction, without a dawn of relief, his humble fortune ruined and his domestic happiness blasted, for his fidelity to his country ; general Wilkinson has to struggle against power and wealth and talents and influence ; and upheld by an approving conscience and a righteous God, he will continue to defend his aspersed honor to the last ebb of life.

“ Justice was always heav'n's distinguished mark,
And he who bears it not, has no friend there.”

Washington, May 1st, 1811.



INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting this volume to the public, we think proper to offer a few introductory observations and inquiries, to the attention of the reader. It will not be denied, that under a government of laws, the interests of the individual and the community are inseparably connected. The social compact, emanating from the people, forms a bond which embraces and gives equal security to the interests of the whole. In such a state of society, where privileges and exemptions are unknown, whatever may affect the rights of one, may endanger the liberties of all.

Let candid men review the scenes of general Wilkinson's persecutions, since his discomfiture of Burr: Let them re-survey the grounds over which he has been pursued, with bitter animosity and unrelenting malice; by public and by private characters; by mock patriots and confessed traitors; by individuals and by hosts; then let them lay their hands upon their hearts, and inquire whether it be wise or just, or constitutional, to raise the public arm against a man, whose services have been acknowledged by that branch of the government, to which he is alone responsible? Whilst the imputations, pointed at his character, have been engendered by envy, malice and disappointed treason, and depend for support on a tissue of hearsays, deductions and ex-parte perjuries, combined and fashioned with professional skill, to alarm the fears and excite the jealousies of the people.

Let it be remembered, that if a man (the record of whose public services cannot be destroyed while the American history endures,) against whom,

after more than three years virulent persecution, no crime has been substantiated, may be thus bayed and harrassed and tortured, no person can be safe, but in the shade of obscurity; that although the sacrifice of Wilkinson may be no loss to the community, it may make way for a succession of victims; and that if the precedent be once established, no eye can discern the termination of its horrors.

Shall it be said of the American government at this tender age, that infected by the corruptions of the old world, it has strayed from the path of righteousness? Shall the enemies of free governments, exultingly proclaim, that the boasted constitution of the United States, the last bulwark of human liberty, is but a paper parapet, rent by every gust of passion, which political or personal animosities may excite? Shall the provisions which the constitution has established for the protection of the citizen, become the sport of passion or prejudice? "No person," says that palladium of our liberty, "shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia when in actual service, in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person, for the same offence, be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb. In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, &c. and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; *to be confronted by the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor*, and to have the assistance of counsel in his defence."

With what salutary caution and parental solicitude, did the framers of this sacred charter of our rights, provide for the safety of the citizen; and wherefore the interposition of these explicit provi-

sions? To confine the current of justice to its proper channel; to guard man against man; to protect the feeble against the strong, and the poor against the rich. On this subject of personal rights, one of the most enlightened and virtuous statesmen of modern times, speaking of the discords which rent the British kingdom, in the seventeenth century, and the spirit of persecution which ensued, has made the following remarkable reflections: * “Surely if there be one moral duty, which
 “is binding upon men, at all times, places and circumstances, and from which no supposed views
 “of policy can excuse them; it is that of granting
 “a full justification to the innocent.” On the trial of lord Strafford, he further observes: “Nothing
 “short of a clearly proved case can justify, or even
 “excuse a departure from the sacred rules of criminal justice: For it can rarely, indeed, happen,
 “that the mischief to be apprehended from suffering any criminal however guilty, to escape, can
 “be equal to that resulting from the violation of
 “those rules, to which the innocent owe the security
 “of all that is dear to them. If such cases have
 “existed, they must have been in instances where
 “trial has been wholly out of the question, as in
 “that of Cesar and other tyrants; but when a
 “man is once in a situation to be tried, and his
 “person in the power of his accusers and his
 “judges, he can no longer be formidable in that
 “degree which alone can justify (if any thing can)
 “the violation of those substantial rules of criminal proceedings.”

The events which disfigure the course of the British history, after the measure of injustice which marked the case of lord Strafford, but more particularly the bloody scenes of revolutionary France, and the lamentable consequences which have ensued, furnish cautionary lessons to man-

* Vide Fox's history of James the 2d.

kind, by which it is to be hoped the councils of the United States may profit.

General Wilkinson has lived too long in the habits of subordination, to be ignorant of the respect which is due to the constituted authorities of his country: But it is impossible he should live so long, as to forget the rights of an American citizen, or abandon those claims to justice, which rest on the fundamental law of the land. The same spirit and the same principle which prompted him to resist the usurpations of the parent state, will prevent his tacit submission to any act of power, unsanctioned by the constitution. Yet no victim of oppression was ever more willing or more solicitous, to meet his accusers before any competent tribunal; and he trusts in the justice of his country, and of those who administer its government, that the immunities secured to the traitor Burr, at Richmond, may not be denied at Washington, to the man who defeated his conspiracy.

The arts, the pains, the industry and even treachery, which have been employed to prejudice the public mind, leave general Wilkinson a poor chance for justice; but conscious honor and the recollection of his long and faithful services, teach him to defy consequences, and will sustain him in every extremity of fortune. Is it lawful, or honorable for a man to act as a juror or judge, who has prejudged the case, years before it has been brought to issue? who after having served on the grand jury which indicted Burr at Richmond, has since declared, he would not "have agreed to find a bill against the conspirator, but for the expectation of indicting Wilkinson also?" Yet it is susceptible of proof before any competent tribunal, that the honorable Mr. John Randolph, has made this declaration. Colonel Burr was permitted to purge the grand inquest of the district before he was even put on his trial. Two gentlemen of high

respectability were excepted to and struck from the jury. (Has general Wilkinson experienced the same indulgence from the committee of Congress?) But Mr. Randolph, although he acknowledged his prejudices against the prisoner, was not challenged, and suffered himself to be sworn as one of the *jury, *before whom Mr. Randolph, as well as colonel Burr, knew general Wilkinson must occupy a conspicuous place:* And why this? For a solution, the reader is referred to the debates of Congress, where he will find, that so early as the month of January, 1807, Mr. Randolph had denounced general Wilkinson on the floor of that honorable house, in the most opprobrious and illiberal manner. It was very natural, after such an excess, that a gentleman of Mr. Randolph's pride, *spirit, honor and veracity*, should be strongly interested

* The following certificate, in the hand writing of the late major Saunders, of the light artillery, will suffice to prove that more than one member of the grand jury, which indicted Burr, was interested in Wilkinson's disgrace.

"I certify, that sometime in the month of February, 1807, I met Mr. Littleton W. Tazewell, with several other gentlemen, at the house of Mr. James Taylor of Norfolk, when a conversation was introduced, touching the conduct of general Wilkinson; in the course of which, Mr. Tazewell proposed a bet of a coat, (which I took up) that general W. would be dismissed the service within nine months from that date. The bet has been decided and paid by Mr. T.

J. SAUNDERS, *Capt. U. S. Art'y.*"

Washington, July 18th, 1808.

We understand the bet was made for a full dress regimental coat, which cost eighty or ninety dollars, and it exhibits a new species of gambling, where the honor of a gentleman is made the subject of a wager; and the party proposing the bet, sits in judgment on the decision. Mr. Tazewell is entitled to the credit of the invention, and we congratulate him on his success; but cannot recommend the sport. We leave to the reader the comments due to so singular a transaction, and will dismiss it with three brief remarks;

1st. It proves the prejudice and prejudgment of Mr. Tazewell, before he was placed on the jury.

2d, It proves that Mr. Tazewell *knew more of Burr's conspiracy than other people*, as nothing had been published, at the time, to implicate Wilkinson with Burr; and

3d. It proves Mr. Tazewell's disqualification to sit as a judge upon Wilkinson's honor, because he was interested in his condemnation; and we all understand Mr. Tazewell's ruling passion.

to see his denunciations verified. He had hazarded much by his denunciations: Not only general Wilkinson's character, but his own, and perhaps something he holds more dear—*his life was at stake*. For it will be recollected, that general Wilkinson stood high in the public estimation; and *at that time*, Mr. Randolph, *held the rank of a gentleman*, and was a professed duellist.* The indictment of the general would have consummated the end and wishes of Mr. Randolph; and his conduct, when on the jury, bespeaks emphatically his solicitude for the result, but does not say much in favor of his delicacy. That an individual, hostile to another, should oppose his interests and expose his vices and infirmities, is the natural effect of civil associations; but that a representative of the people should abuse his privilege, and employ his seat in the councils of the nation, to send forth invectives and calumnies, exciting popular indignation against a public officer or the national executive, for the purpose of *avenging a personal affront or political disappointment*, must be condemned by every person of candor, or even common honesty, and will require more than Mr. Randolph's eloquence and sophistry, to justify it.

From the conduct of the committee of the House of Representatives, general Wilkinson had no appeal but to the tribunal of the public. *Inculpatory testimony alone would be received, and that has been retailed to the world through hostile prints*; stigmatized and dishonored by dark intrigues, and perjuries the most vile, he has been compelled to resort to the press for the vindication of his character, and he yields to the compulsion with reluctance; not because he has any doubts of the justice of his cause and the strength of his proofs, but because the mode of defence is uncongenial to

* The history of his outrage on the honorable Mr. Dana, and Wilkinson's agency in that affair, will be given in another place.

the habits and temper of a soldier ; because a *war of words* is generally endless ; because a single individual, contending with a multitude of presses, directed by angry and unfriendly passions, is no match for the thousand tongues with which they daily speak against him ; because truth is not the object of his assailants, and an inquiry carried on by accusation and defence in the public prints, can never subserve, in such a case, the purposes of justice, especially where the accusers enter upon the investigation, with minds desperately resolved on the conviction of the accused ; because the indiscriminate discussion of any man's character, by licentious newswriters, must inevitably taint his reputation, by the familiar connexion of his name with those of the most profligate wretches. For these reasons, and for many more like them, general Wilkinson would have declined a recurrence to the press, even in the shape of a volume : But haunted by his persecutors, in all the paths of his life, his feelings attempted to be tortured by every conceivable artifice, the Congress of the United States tacitly yielding, in his cause, to the boldness of faction ; false friends throwing off the mask, and impudent ignorance raising its ignoble voice against him, he has finally decided to collect himself upon his own centre ; to review the actions of his past career ; to justify the confidence of his still remaining friends ; and no longer to forget what he owes to his own heart, and to his military fame. If in the prosecution of this resolution, private and confidential letters are exposed, let it be attributed to its true cause ; let it be placed to the account of that voracious appetite of calumny, from whose gnawing tooth no depository is sacred, no assylum is safe ; to that ferocious temper of mind, which, seeking personal revenge under the mask of public motives, rends the bosom of private confidence, and derides all sense of fidelity.

Should there be any who, seeking distinctions of evidence, may object to voluntary affidavits, let him recollect that such has been the species of proof adduced to convict general Wilkinson : But it will be found that this volume is not essentially liable to this objection, for the vouchers in the appendix are chiefly official, and otherwise of such a nature as cannot be disputed, and it is upon them the general rests his conduct and character.

Mr. Clark *complains* that he is compelled to prove a *negative*, and yet he requires that general Wilkinson should prove an hundred negatives. He feels the difficulty in his own case, but will not allow it to prevail with respect to the general. Considering his *ingenuity*, it would at least be candid in him to grant the same indulgence to Wilkinson, which he claims for the establishment of his own innocence : But general Wilkinson waves all *excuses* of this sort, and trusts to the solidity and correctness of his own actions, properly developed, for a complete acquittal in the judgment of his country.

Another excuse offered by Mr. Clark to account for the insufficiency of the testimony he has adduced, merits a cursory view. He represents himself as a single man, contending with an officer of rank, who is protected by the strong arm of government. This rhetoric might answer in a monarchy ; but what governmental power in the United States, can shield an individual from the claims of justice ? Nay, what administration is potent enough to shield him, even from the gripe of popular persecution ? The public opinion is always paramount to the constituted authorities, and his chance is slender indeed, who relies upon government as an *Ægis* against the assaults of detraction. The administration itself cannot stand up against the tremendous current of national sentiment ; and when the question is, whether our

rulers shall yield up an individual, the victim of obloquy, (whether justly or unjustly,) or yield up their own places, it is not difficult to divine the result.

And is Daniel Clark that isolated individual, which he represents himself to be? Let an hundred hireling partizans reply; let the sway which he holds in the bank at New Orleans; let the numerous dependents with whom he surrounds himself, by various allurements, and within the circle of whom he is intrenched; let the sums which he has squandered in persecuting Wilkinson, by hiring presses, by procuring witnesses, and by forming combinations for that persecution; let all all these answer the inquiry: And what protection from authority is extended to Wilkinson? What bank enables him to secure converts to his cause? What presses are leagued for his support? What mouths are fed for the purposes of uttering calumnies in his behalf? But we must close the contrast, lest our feelings should be roused into passion, and we should be urged to the use of expressions, which however merited, it would be undignified to employ.

This volume, which will be soon followed by others, is an answer to the accusation against general Wilkinson, of a participation in Burr's unlawful project. To that single point, and the vindication of his conduct in the transactions connected with it, the subsequent pages will be chiefly confined. Pressed by circumstances, and desirous to meet, as promptly as possible, the tempest of persecution, by which he is assailed, he has deemed it expedient to offer the second volume of his memoirs to the public, before the first has been committed to the press. *The discomfiture of Burr's conspiracy being the foundation of the hue and cry raised against him*, it is proper it should be first examined; and as it is solely general Wilkinson's

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intention to vindicate himself, he does not pretend to write a history of that traiterous enterprize, to which those are more competent, who were actually in the secret.

Distinct answers to the mass of accusations hurled upon his head and multiplying like the hydra, is not the labor of a day. But the volume which general Wilkinson now presents, will, he hopes, serve to evince the industry he has employed to fulfil his engagements to the public.

The charge of his connivance at the murder of the soldiery intrusted to his command, is of all, the most cruel cut which has been made at general Wilkinson's sensibilities and honor; and it appears to have been strangely countenanced by those, who ought to have known how to estimate it. In the course of ten or twelve days, an examination of the report of the committee of Congress, respecting the mortality among the troops on the Mississippi, will be published. The intrigue, cruelty and injustice, exercised towards Wilkinson, on that subject, will be then exposed; and it will be established, by irrefragible testimony, that his obedience to his orders, lost the lives of hundreds of men; that the position of his camp at *Terre au Bœuf*, is not only the most healthy on the lower Mississippi, but the best circumstanced for the defence of New Orleans against a maritime invasion; and that if the country is to be defended, that spot must be re-occupied. The exposition of the Spanish pension, and conspiracy, and the proceedings of the committee appointed to investigate general Wilkinson's life and conduct, will soon appear, to disgrace his accusers, to shame his enemies, and justify his friends.

In entering upon the perusal of the present volume, the reader is requested to make a brief reflection, relative to the nature of the case he is about to examine: He should be informed, that not-

withstanding the clamours which have been raised against general Wilkinson, from one end of the United States to the other, in public prints and in popular assemblies, by private individuals and by public characters, respecting his participation in the very conspiracy which he crushed, not a particle of positive testimony has been offered, to sustain the calumnies applied to him; and that he is at this time, reduced to the sad alternative, of defending himself against false deductions, groundless allegations and vague suspicions, or of sinking under the load of approbium, by which he is oppressed.

This licentiousness, the offensive disease of republics, forms the alloy of those substantial blessings which flow from free governments, and is generally termed a tax on public station; but there are cases, in which it might be more properly designated a tax on public service: Such was the case of Socrates, of Cicero and of Belisarius; and if we may be permitted to emulate, where we dare not compare, in the instance before us, we behold general Wilkinson, for saving his country from a civil war, and guarding the constitution against violation, on his own single discretion, without orders or instructions, doomed to suffer every vilification of character, which detraction can invent and persecution uphold. Under a government less moderate and wise, or in a period of impending dangers, that sophistry, which accompanies popular passion, and which has almost overwhelmed him, would probably have brought him without trial and without a murmur, to the scaffold or the gibbet.

Wilkinson has to struggle against a current of slander, difficult to resist, because it is fed from a thousand streams: Insulated and abandoned, he stands alone against the mighty percussion of wealth, numbers and talents: But although his adversaries be numerous and powerful, with pas-

sions as black as Erebus and as foul as treason, supported by a good cause and a good conscience, he will contend so long as a spark of justice can be found in the country, and longer he desires not to live: For if justice be banished the United States, where will she find an assylum on earth?

The following letters from the President, Mr. Jefferson, and the secretary of war, general Dearborn, after Burr's capture and the development of his traiterous designs, are conclusive testimonies of their approbation of Wilkinson's conduct: To these gentlemen, Wilkinson was immediately responsible; to them his every act was reported, and every thought unveiled; they were the legitimate judges of his actions, and were best qualified to form a just estimate of his merits. If these gentlemen had been deficient in integrity and independence, they would have abandoned Wilkinson to his enemies, and, pursuing that pur-blind policy, which for momentary relief, plunges the victim into the gulf, and infallibly defeats its own selfish purposes, would have said, "your services have been useful to us, but your persecutions are oppressive; you have incurred numerous enemies, and we have no popularity to spare; we must drop you or the people will drop us, and you know charity begins at home;" or if they had been capable of descending to a base, perfidious compromise, Wilkinson's disgrace would have been received with transport, by the advocates of Burr, as a peace-offering; and the odium he has divided with those gentlemen, would have been attached to himself alone.

But it will be recorded in the page of history, when the frail hand which guides this pen shall be forgotten, that Jefferson and Dearborn, preferring that dignified, honorable, equitable course of policy, which disdains the idea of venal calculation, yielded to principle, to justice and a sense of

duty, that patronage which Wilkinson had so richly earned. It has been artfully insinuated, for political purposes, that there existed some secret understanding between Mr. Jefferson and general Wilkinson, in relation to Burr's conspiracy; but the suspicion is utterly destitute of foundation; not a paragraph, nor a syllable, not a word, nor even a lisp, was ever interchanged by Mr. Jefferson, with general Wilkinson, concerning colonel Burr, anterior to the 21st October, 1806, nor with any member of his administration, touching Burr's conspiracy, further than is set forth in these memoirs.

Copy of a letter from the President of the United States to General Wilkinson.

WASHINGTON, June 21st, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED, last night, yours of the 16th, and sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival at Richmond, against the impudent surmises and hopes of the band of conspirators, who, because they are as yet, permitted to walk abroad, and even to be in the character of witnesses until such a measure of evidence shall be collected as will place them securely at the bar of justice, attempt to cover their crimes under noise and insolence. You have indeed had a fiery trial at New Orleans; but it was soon apparent that the clamorous were only the criminal, endeavoring to turn the public attention from themselves and their leader upon any other object.

Having delivered to the attorney general, all the papers I possessed, respecting Burr and his accomplices, when he went to Richmond, I could only write to him (without knowing whether he was at Philadelphia, Wilmington or Delaware,) for your letter of October 21st, desired by the court. If

you have a copy of it, and chuse to give it in, it will, I think, have a good effect ; for it was my intention, if I should receive it from Mr. Rodney, not to communicate it without your consent, after I learnt your arrival. Mr Rodney will certainly either bring or send it within the course of a day or two, and it will be instantly forwarded to Mr. Hay ; for the same reason, I cannot send the letter of J. P. D. as you propose, to Mr. Hay. I do not recollect what name these initials indicate, but the paper, whatever it is, must be in the hands of Mr. Rodney. Not so as to your letter to Dayton, for as that could be of no use in the prosecution, and was reserved to be forwarded or not, according to circumstances, I retained it in my own hands and now return it to you. If you think Dayton's son should be summoned, it can only be done from Richmond. We have no subpoenas here. Within about a month, we shall leave this to place ourselves in healthier stations. Before that, I trust you will be liberated from your present attendance. It would have been of great importance to have had you here with the secretary at war, because I am very anxious to begin such works as will render Plaquemine impregnable, and an insuperable barrier to the passage of any force up or down the river. But the secretary at war sets out on Wednesday, to meet with some other persons at New York, and determine on the works necessary to be undertaken to put that place "hors d'insulte," and thence he will have to proceed northwardly. I believe I must ask you, at your leisure, to state to me in writing what you think will answer our views at Plaquemine, within the limits of expense which we can contemplate, and of which you can form a pretty good idea.

Your enemies have filled the public ear with slanders, and your mind with trouble on that account. The establishment of their guilt will let the

world see what they ought to think of their clamours ; it will dissipate the doubts of those who doubted for want of knowledge, and will place you on higher ground in the public estimate, and public confidence. No one is more sensible than myself of the injustice which has been aimed at you.

Accept, I pray you, my salutations and assurances of respect and esteem.

(Signed) TH: JEFFERSON.

General Wilkinson.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*



Copy of a letter from the Secretary of War to General Wilkinson.

WASHINGTON, June 22d, 1807.

DEAR GENERAL,

YOUR letters of the 17th have been duly received. A most extraordinary combination of circumstances has accompanied the traiterous movements of Burr and his associates in various parts of the United States ; and you have been the mark at which the greatest force of their envenomed shafts have been directed ; but what has been most degrading to the character of our country, is the open, avowed support given in every direction, by almost every leading character among our political opponents, to a man and his measures, who they would have hanged at any period within the last ten years, except when they thought he could be used as a tool for their own purposes. Those characters have now furnished the most unequivocal evidence of their political and moral depravity.

They would damn you and every other person who has in any measure contributed to the suppression of Burr's treason ; and it appears that they have calculated with confidence, that if you could be destroyed, Burr might be saved. If such conduct had been confined to characters of low and doubtful standing in society, we should have less occasion for regret ; but when we look about and observe who are engaged, either directly or indirectly, it is truly mortifying.

With sentiments of esteem,

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

(Signed)

H. DEARBORN.

General Wilkinson.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

EXAMINATION
OF
GENERAL WILKINSON'S CONDUCT,
IN RELATION TO
BURR'S CONSPIRACY.

CHAPTER I.

MUTATION of character, in public life, unhappily for mankind, is but too common; for such are the frailties of human nature, that the same man may, at different periods, be found virtuous and depraved, exalted and debased. An intimate acquaintance with an individual, celebrated for his understanding, and distinguished by the public trust, is an object of laudable emulation. But, should such individual fall from the heights of honor, and incur the denunciations of his country, to have been his friend, or even his acquaintance, too frequently is converted into a source of reproach. This is the effect of an inevitable association of ideas, which extends the infamy as well as the glory of a principal figure, to the remotest objects with which it is connected.

There was a period of time, when the correspondence and friendship of colonel Burr could not be considered dishonorable. He had been a meritorious officer of the revolution; had accompanied the great Montgomery to the walls of Quebec, and stood by his side when he fell. To genius and education, and knowledge and eloquence, he combined the most engaging manners. The highly respectable and powerful state of New York, had confided to him the representation of a moiety of her sovereignty, in the Senate of the Union; and the American people had voluntarily elected him to the second office of the government, thereby giving him a strong testimonial of their

confidence. Under such circumstances, an intimacy with colonel Burr could not affect the purity of any person's reputation.

A sympathetic remembrance is common to every soldier of the revolution, whose breast is not steeled against the finest feelings of nature. This sentiment, consecrated by the glorious cause in which they fought, derived force from the recollection of the sufferings and perils they had encountered together; and hence the friendship of colonel Burr and general Wilkinson, which was cultivated by the generous sensibilities of military men, and cemented by the interchange of good offices.

The rupture of a connexion thus formed, could not be effected by light circumstances, but required extraordinary proofs of guilt in one of the parties; for the pain excited by the suspicion of an old friend's dishonor, and the anxiety felt for his innocence, will always strongly resist the belief of his guilt, until the evidence of his criminality is made manifest; and in this generous sentiment, we perceive one of the safest guards of social harmony. It was by degrees, and under approaches the most insidious and equivocal, that the plot of colonel Burr was unveiled to general Wilkinson; and the jealousies excited at St. Louis in September, 1805, were not confirmed, but by his mysterious letter, Swartwout's explanations, and the intelligence of James L. Donaldson, esquire, received at Natchitoches, in October and November, 1806. The discovery of colonel Burr's turpitude, cost Wilkinson many keen pangs of regret; but he neither paused over his duty, nor faltered for the line of his conduct, to discomfit the sinister enterprize. The moment he was satisfied that colonel Burr was engaged in an unlawful adventure, the instant he felt their hearts no longer vibrated in unison, he cut the chord of their friendship and discarded him forever.

By no association of ideas, therefore, ought general Wilkinson's former intimacy with colonel Burr, to be tainted with the odium of Burr's conspiracy; unless it can be demonstrated, by written proofs or by creditable witnesses, that Wilkinson's correspondence with Burr, while the latter enjoyed a good reputation, had reference to those transactions which produced his disgrace. It will appear in the sequel, that general Wilkinson in this particular, as well as in every other, stands acquitted of all connivance at the plot.

The mind of colonel Burr is extremely ardent, and strongly tinctured with ambition. At one point of time, he thought he saw the Presidential office within his reach; and it has appeared, that he grasped at it with an eagerness as censurable, as the principle upon which he claimed it was unrighteous. Fortunately for the nation, the attempt proved abortive: the colonel was condemned by the public voice, and the virulence of party spirit, eventually made him a political outlaw. If general Wilkinson had understood the extent of colonel Burr's ambitious intrigues, he would have been blameable for maintaining that friendly footing, which, in the first instance, was justified by the original causes of their intimacy. But colonel Burr solemnly averred, that the various imputations levelled at his consistency, were misrepresentations or fabrications. Wilkinson put confidence in the assurance of his friend, and always believed him an American in principle, a patriot in soul, and an injured man, until his own acts betrayed his guilty designs. Permit us, in this place, to tax the public attention with the following strong circumstances. The facts which verify colonel Burr's traitorous intentions, were scattered over a wide extent of country; they could only be collected as they sprung up, from the general inquiries which his movements produced; and it was not until after his arrest, that the full evidence of his guilt was developed.

It is upon every man's recollection, that in colonel Burr's contest for the government of the commonwealth of New York, so late as the year 1804, he was supported by the suffrages of more than twenty thousand freemen; but failing in this attempt, although he descended from the Vice Presidential chair with dignity and eclat, he became, in some degree, as a statesman, a stranger in his native land. One party had disowned him, and the duel, which terminated fatally for general Alexander Hamilton, had rendered him odious to the other. A sentiment favorable to colonel Burr still, however, prevailed. He had many zealous friends, many ardent admirers, and his humiliation had abated the animosities of his adversaries. His abilities were acknowledged; and, on the impeachment of judge Chase, his pre-eminence had been confessed. His loss to the councils of his country was regretted, and his recal became a subject of serious consideration to numbers; and among them, no one took a stronger interest than general Wilkinson.

During the winter and spring, 1805, it was frequently mentioned, as a desirable thing, that colonel Burr's talents should be secured to the House of Representatives. The colonel was dear to Wilkinson, who does nothing by halves ; he was of course strongly inclined to a measure, so favorable to the recovery of the public confidence, which might restore colonel Burr's utility to his fellow citizens, and render the remainder of his life honorable to his name and to his country. In a conversation with the honorable Mr. Fowler, then of Congress, on this subject, he informed the general, that the honorable Mr. Lyon, then and now of Congress, had suggested the idea of colonel Burr's going to the state of Tennessee, where his election to Congress might, probably, be effected, as residence there was not a requisite qualification. General Wilkinson communicated the suggestion to colonel Burr, who listened to it with satisfaction ; embraced the proposition with apparent alacrity, and requested the general to procure him an interview with Mr. Fowler, which was done ; and after some conversation between them, it was agreed that colonel Burr should converse with colonel Lyon on the subject. The letter of Mr. Fowler, [*Appendix, No. 1.*] bearing date the 10th January, 1810, substantiates the fact, and explains and corroborates the correspondence, which afterwards took place on the same subject, between governor Harrison, colonel Burr and general Wilkinson. A letter also from colonel Lyon to general Wilkinson, [*Appendix, No. 2.*] under date November 19th, 1805, alludes to the same circumstance in the following expression, "*Burr lost the prospect in Tennessee, by not pursuing the road I pointed out for him.*"

In consequence of the failure of Burr's election to Congress in Tennessee, and his despair of being returned for the territory of Orleans, general Wilkinson proposed to him a plan for his election from the Indiana territory, into which the colonel affected to enter, with great ardor ; and Wilkinson accordingly wrote governor Harrison, on the 19th September, 1805, by colonel Burr, the very morning of his departure from St. Louis, intreating him to use his best exertions to "return the colonel to Congress." The tenor of that letter, [*Appendix, No. 3.*] will demonstrate, that general Wilkinson justly estimated the temper and disposition of colonel Burr ; who, driven to desperation, and wandering through the country as a political outcast, might attempt any plan to recover his lost consequence,

however embarrassing to the government, or injurious to the Union. Under these impressions the general, writing to governor Harrison, says "I will demand from your friendship a boon, in its effects co-extensive with the Union; a boon, perhaps, on which that Union may much depend; a boon, which may serve you, may serve me, and can disserve neither; a boon, which, from my knowledge of men, motives and principles, will be acceptable to those whose policies we are bound to support." The reader will here naturally recur to the official situations of governor Harrison and general Wilkinson, at the time this letter was written, and inquire "whose policies" they were "bound to support?" At the period in question, Harrison was governor of the territory of Indiana, and Wilkinson governor of Louisiana; they both derived their powers from the government of the United States: and, of course, they were *bound to support* the measures of the then existing administration. It was because Wilkinson was so bound to support, and because he was desirous to serve Burr, to avert possible mischiefs, and turn his abilities into an useful channel, that he wrote to, and implored governor Harrison, to procure colonel Burr a seat in Congress, in the place of Mr. Parke.

The import of this letter and the circumstances under which it was written, would suffice, were other proofs wanting to overthrow all the evidence which has been brought, to convict general Wilkinson of a connexion with Burr in his conspiracy; it was written the very morning Burr left Wilkinson, and of course subsequently to every other topic of conference: now if any sinister plot had been previously concerted between them, it is impossible Wilkinson should have exerted all his influence with governor Harrison, to procure for the colonel an appointment, which must necessarily have diverted his attention, from the active scenes of unbridled ambition, to the solemn functions of national legislation. Governor Harrison, however, did not consider the proposition practicable, and consequently no attempt was made to carry it into effect: colonel Burr himself, while at Vincennes, in the society of governor Harrison, wrote Wilkinson on the 26th September, 1805, and alluding to the subject [*Appendix, No. 4.*] says, "there is probably, some secret embarrassment, of which you and I are ignorant." This was the first letter ever written by colonel Burr to Wilkinson of so mysterious a cast, and in which he departs

from ingenuity, and sports with candor. His affected ignorance of Wilkinson's letter to Harrison, his pretended silence to the governor on the subject of that letter, and his contemptuous remarks respecting the attorney general, a gentleman of New York, whom he had recommended to Wilkinson, were all acts of disingenuity.

Pending the year 1805, general Wilkinson received various letters from colonel Burr, which will be found in the appendix, (Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10) and it will be perceived are of little importance. By that of the 26th March, 1805, it appears that colonel Burr retained, in some measure, the good will of the executive of the United States, for the doctor Brown mentioned in that letter was his particular friend and relative, and had been appointed secretary to the territory of Louisiana, on his recommendation. The letter of the 30th April, 1805, contains the expression, "I have some thing to say which cannot be written," and this may be construed, by prejudiced persons, into an allusion to something previously understood: but, if it means any thing, it refers to something *to be* communicated; to something which Wilkinson did not understand, and that Burr was anxious to make known to him. It was peculiar to colonel Burr to deal in mysterious hints, and to give an air of solemnity to the most common topics; this is exemplified in his letter of the 30th of April, which relates merely to his departure from Pittsburgh, but would, from the mode of expression, induce the superficial reader to believe, he was about to embark on some momentous enterprize; for instead of simply saying, "I shall embark at nine this morning," he begins thus; "Finding every thing ready and the auspices favorable," &c. The introduction of the word "*auspices*," so dignified in Roman history, attaches the idea of some grand military movement, to the mere circumstance of his embarking at Pittsburg, on board a flat-bottomed boat with his servants and horses. Indeed in a letter as early as the 22d July, 1800, of the most familiar innocent nature, when he disclaims "politics," colonel Burr employs language which a suspicious mind would charge with mystery.

Long before the year 1805, colonel Burr had resorted to the use of a cypher, under circumstances which leave no room to imagine that he then entertained an idea of his subsequent projects. On referring to a letter from him to general Wilkinson, dated Ballstown, 10th October,

1800, [*Appendix, No. 10 A.*] when Burr was a candidate for the Vice-Presidency, we shall find his application to Wilkinson for a cypher to be used in correspondence: If therefore any conclusion can be drawn from circumstances of this kind, candor will allow that facts declare as loudly for general Wilkinson as against him; because no man can suppose, on rational grounds, that when Burr requested a cypher in 1800, it was to conceal the communication of a project, directed to the subversion of the very government, to the second place in which he, at that time, aspired. The use of the cypher, then, furnishes no presumption of guilt, because it was employed at a period when no guilt could be presumed; and Wilkinson resorted to it, merely as a safe-guard against impertinent curiosity, to protect opinions which he had no right to expose, on occasions the most innocent; and when colonel Burr himself deemed it altogether unnecessary, as will appear from a letter of the colonel's dated April 5th, 1805, [*Appendix, No. 11.*] wherein he says (speaking of the difficulty of decyphering a letter * from Wilkinson) "why put such a tax on the pleasure of your correspondence?" A cypher is generally considered a type of mystery, even more so than the most obscure or mysterious hints, in ordinary script; yet here we find it veiled no treason nor treasonable communication, and as far as it can be enlisted as an argument, it exculpates Wilkinson from the charge of any sinister collusion with Burr, as will be more fully shewn hereafter.

A digest of the various modes of attack which have been made upon general Wilkinson, would occupy a volume; for, while some contend that he was corrupted by Burr, others insist that it was Wilkinson who seduced the colonel from the path of loyalty; and the scene of corruption is laid at Washington, at Massac, or St. Louis, as may best suit the reasoning of his accusers; and there are those who boldly assert, that Burr visited New Orleans under the instructions of Wilkinson, for the purpose of maturing the plot. The following extract of a letter from Burr to Wilkinson, bearing date "Louisville, May 19th, 1805," [*Appendix, No. 8.*] must silence all jealousies of a vicious combination, anterior to that period; and were it necessary, would give force to the fact of Burr's profess-

* Wilkinson has no copy of this letter, but it is believed contained an admonition to Burr to return to the state of New York, to meet the laws and resume his stand; not very symptomatic of treason.

ed views in Tennessee, for the obtainment of a seat in Congress, otherwise, it cannot be presumed he would have embarked at Pittsburg before the day of rendezvous, (the first of May,) and proceeded for New Orleans without his credentials. In this letter he says, "It is with extreme regret I leave the falls (of Ohio,) without seeing you, but boats from Pittsburg the 5th May, had not heard of your arrival, of course you could not then have been there; besides, report says you are to pass days at, Cin. [Cincinnati.] *The letters which I expected from you may now be addressed to Orleans. I hope to see you at St. Louis in the autumn.*"

It results irresistibly from this letter, that no plan existed at the time, which bore relation to New Orleans, and that even Burr's visit to St. Louis was a matter undetermined. Colonel Burr landed at Louisville, and traversed the country to Nashville, soliciting, in his route, the influence of the honorable Mr. Brown and other gentlemen of Kentucky, to favor his meditated elections.

It has been seen from general Wilkinson's letter to governor Harrison, in September 1805, that Burr's election to Congress was, at that time, an object of Wilkinson's solicitude, and it is acknowledged that he had previously exerted himself to accomplish the same end in Tennessee. Wilkinson's destination in descending the Ohio, was for St. Louis, and Burr's long visit to Nashville threw him in the general's rear, which produced an unexpected interview at Massac. Burr appeared to despond of success in the desired election for the state of Tennessee, which induced Wilkinson to propose his return for the territory of Orleans. He affected to embrace the proposition with avidity, and Wilkinson proceeded to make the best arrangements in his power to secure a favourable issue. It was to this point he alludes in his letter to Mr. D. Clark of the 9th June, 1805, [*Appendix, No. 13.*] when he employs the expression, "things improper to letter." Those things related to the means to be employed for effecting col. Burr's return to Congress, and the fact is corroborated by the statement of governor Claiborne; * this

* *We are authorised to make the following statement:*

1st. That governor Claiborne in the year 1805, was requested by several of his friends in the state of Tennessee, to use his influence to favor the election of colonel Burr from that state to Congress.

2d. That governor Claiborne was, the same season, (1805) informed, that colonel Burr assisted by general Wilkinson, had formed a plan for his removal, from the government of the territory of Orleans.

letter, which Mr. Clark and his associates have so ingeniously tortured to wound Wilkinson, in other respects, solicits civilities and services to colonel Burr ; and speaks of opening "a commercial mine, were Mr. Clark at St. Louis." It requires an overweening faith, in contradictions, to believe that Wilkinson could be engaged in a treasonable, warlike plot, and, at the same time, be solicitous for entering upon extensive commercial operations ; and it is scarcely credible that he should send col. Burr all the way from Massac to New Orleans, to discourse with Mr. Clark upon a plan to violate the laws, the peace or the integrity of the Union, under which he held a territorial government and was military commander. Charges built upon equivocal expressions, are nothing more than suspicions, magnified by cunning and propagated by credulity. The letter from Wilkinson to Clark must be taken entire ; a court of justice would not admit it on any other terms. Rejecting garbled quotations, and viewing it altogether, it is reduced to a solitary cypher in the scale of proofs, against Wilkinson's fidelity to his country.

But how will this letter bear against Mr. Clark ? Taken in the most natural construction, and examined in the light which he has himself thrown upon it, the following deductions are warranted ; that Burr, on reaching New Orleans, was immediately advised, by his friends there, of the existence of the Mexican association, which had been previously organized and matured ; nothing could be more auspicious to his schemes than this combination. He found his views anticipated and his work half done ; and being determined to extend his own influence and acquire the confidence of the associates, he resolved to pervert the sense of Wilkinson's letter, and employ it to the furtherance of his own treasonable views : He unfolds his designs to Clark, informs him that the commander in chief and the army were concerned with him, and to verify the information, he misinterprets the mysterious passage in Wilkinson's letter : How else could Mr. Clark discover in this letter, "positive proof of the general's participation in Burr's plans ?" these are his own words, in page 119 of his "Proofs ;" for it was colonel Burr only, who could

3d. That in the same season, 1805, governor Claiborne was informed by the clerk of the House of Representatives, for the territory of Orleans, that the motive of colonel Burr's visit, was to get himself elected to Congress for the territory, and that if he had attended the meeting of the legislature he would have been chosen.

in this manner explain Wilkinson's letter to him : Or, what else could induce Mr. Clark to write the very extraordinary letter to general Wilkinson of the 7th September, not long after colonel Burr left New Orleans. [*See appendix, No. 14.*] It is very remarkable and will necessarily have great weight with the public, in the examination of the question of Mr. Clark's guilt, how, *at that early period of Burr's movements*, he should become so minutely acquainted with the extensive ramifications of the plot, as the contents of that letter prove him to be. He details them with a precision which can leave no doubt, that he had derived his information from Burr himself. With characteristic subtilty, however, he addresses this crafty letter to Wilkinson ; but artful as it is it has entangled him in difficulties, from which he struggles in vain to extricate himself. On this occasion, as on many others, Mr. Clark has invoked the name of Mr. Thomas Power, to bear him out ; and fearless of contradiction, makes this *gentleman* the author of the information which he received from Burr, and conveyed to Wilkinson in his letter of the 7th September. How convenient it is to a man of Mr. Clark's turbulent spirit *to have a person at hand always ready to affirm or deny at his nod* ; but look at the project as it is depicted by Mr. Clark, and say whether it be probable, nay, possible, that the Spanish officers should have developed, with such political and geographical nicety, the particulars of so diversified, and complicated a plot, whilst it was yet in embryo ? Yet, knowing the falsity of the report, as Mr. Clark asserts he did, in relation to himself, [*See "Proofs," page 95.*] being deeply engaged at the time, in mercantile adventures, to Vera Cruz, *under the patronage of the Marquis de Cassa Calvo*, [*See his letter to D. W. Coxe, Appendix, No. 15.*] why should he, in the moment of his embarkation, deem it expedient to write to Wilkinson, at a thousand miles distance, on a subject in which he took no interest ? A man of Mr. Clark's character never acts without a motive ; under a heavy mercantile adventure, he had masked his plan of *espionage* at Mexico ; and the letter he writes to Wilkinson, was intended to answer the triple purpose, to apprise Wilkinson that he was advised of Burr's plan, to hint to him the part he was playing, and at the same time, to draw from him an acknowledgment of his co-operation.

When offering his "Proofs" to the world against gene-

ral Wilkinson, Mr. Clark found several obstacles in his way. He leaped over the testimony of captain Murray, because he could not break it down ; flounders over that of Mr. Graham, without affecting its stability, and is brought up by his own letter of September 7th, which he endeavors to explain away, but in a manner so lame and feeble, as to justify the preceding interpretations, and leave no doubt of his association with Burr. "The truth is," says Mr. Clark, in his explanation, "that the reports, though I could not credit them fully, had made some impression on me. I could not, without *offending the gentlemen* whose names had been mentioned, demand a serious explanation, and *I then adopted the light, familiar manner of treating the subject, that will be remarked in the letter.*" [See his "*Proofs*," page 96.] Mr. Clark says, "He knew the report to be false, as it related to himself;" and yet he could not mention the affair to the gentlemen, whose names had been given to him, without offending them. What an insult is this to common sense ! Could the investigation of a report in circulation, be offensive to those whom it most interested ? or, would Mr. Clark's vindication of his innocence have offended them ? On the contrary, Mr. Clark's exculpation from the charge, would have proved satisfactory to his ancient fellow subjects, and the explanation which he affects to shun, from motives of delicacy, was imposed as a duty upon the officers of Spain, and doubtless would have been gladly met by them. The letter is also conclusive evidence, by the deliberate admission of the party, that he had a *design*, growing out of the impression made on him by Burr's project, in writing to general Wilkinson.

On the 8th March, 1806, general Wilkinson answered this letter of Mr. Clark's. The lapse of time proves, that the wonderful rumours communicated by him to the general, had made little impression on his mind, and in treating them as a "Tale of a Tub," [See *appendix*, No. 16.] he manifestly slighted Mr. Clark's discernment, and evinced his ignorance of the illicit designs of Burr.

When general Wilkinson was examined before the court at Richmond, on the trial of Burr, he stated, that "he had received several letters from colonel Burr, of a very ambiguous cast, but they contained nothing treasonable;" that he (general W.) wrote to a minister, (the honorable Robert Smith) and said in his letter, "Burr is about something, but whether internal or external I can-

not discover. *I think you should keep an eye to him.*" [See page 210 of the President's message to Congress, relative to Burr's conspiracy.] On being questioned, general Wilkinson could not recollect the precise time when he thus wrote to Mr. Smith: But the period has been since ascertained by the deposition of captain Hughes [*Appendix, No. 17.*] It was in September, 1805; a notification, quite early enough to exculpate Wilkinson from any charge of participation, and sufficient to obviate all unfavorable suggestions, which may be tortured from another letter of Burr to Wilkinson of the 12th December, 1805, [*Appendix, No. 18.*] which contains several mysterious allusions, but so indistinctly expressed, as to furnish no clue to the real objects of the writer. Speaking of "a certain speculation," Burr says, "it is not deemed material to write *till the whole can be communicated.*" What is the candid interpretation of this language? Why, if it was not material to write on the subject till the "*whole*" could be communicated it follows that down to the period, of the date of the letter (12th December, 1805,) nothing of a particular nature had been communicated. When a man tells you he will not write on a subject, till he can communicate the whole, he means that he will not trouble you with detached parts, until he can tell you the *whole story*. This was the case with Burr, who neither informed Wilkinson of the whole nor of any part of his plans, further than mere verbal "speculations," such as any individual might indulge in, and from which Wilkinson could glean nothing sufficiently definitive, to authorise any counteraction or explicit information. Another expression in the same letter, (of December 12th,) supports these observations. Burr says, "it is *believed* that Wilkinson will give audience to a delegation, composed of Dayton and Adair, in February." If general Wilkinson had been in the plot, is it probable this kind of phraseology would have been used? And what necessity for a "delegation" to an associated conspirator? Why say "it is *believed*?" Is such the language which peers in guilt hold, the one to the other? The very words employed, imply doubts of Wilkinson's disposition. This is not the language of confidence. Had Burr been certain that Wilkinson was co-operating with him, he would have said, in his usual laconic way, "Adair and Dayton will wait on Wilkinson, in February;" instead of which, he says "it is believed, &c." or, if Wilkinson had actually been leagued with

him, why should he have thought of a delegation at all? It would appear frivolous to dwell on these points so long, were it not that the enemies of general Wilkinson will spare no pains to pervert them; and it was to the probability of such perversion, that Wilkinson alluded in his testimony, at Richmond, when he said that Burr's letters "were calculated to inculcate him, should they be exposed." [Page 311, *President's message*.] They are nevertheless, now fearlessly exposed. It will be seen that they are, as Wilkinson told the court and the jury, ambiguous, misteriously hinting at what they never openly proclaim; aiming at Wilkinson but *never explaining any thing* to him; and, in general, the contents are such as prejudice and mental obliquity may construe as they please, but can never draw from them any other conclusion than a *vague suspicion*, unsupported by any circumstance or fact whatsoever.

There never was, perhaps, a scheme more deeply planned, or more artfully contrived to shake the allegiance of an officer to his government, than that put in practice to wean general Wilkinson from his fidelity to the United States. It commenced at a remote point, and in a form not open to general or even particular suspicion. A public print was established in Kentucky, by the notorious and implacable enemies of general Wilkinson, under the title of the *Western World*; and John Wood, a man of education and abilities as a writer for the press, was employed as the editor: Mr. Wood, who had ministered to colonel Burr's vanity and ambition in New York, under the guidance of his employers, filled this gazette with all sorts of calumnies against Wilkinson: calumnies which were calculated to shake the confidence of government in him, and by reaction to shake his attachment to the government; to weaken the ties of patriotism by which he was bound to his country; and by rendering him doubtful and desperate, to prepare him for the first proposition of treason which might be made to him.

It was impossible Wilkinson could be insensible to these attacks, and in a critical and awful moment, when on the eve of offering his life to the service of his country, against a military force of three fold strength, he addressed President Jefferson on the subject. The letter in which he did this, [*Appendix, No. 19.*] breathes a spirit of honorable feelings, and exhibits a sense of indignation, above the coldness of affectation, at the unjustifiable

means employed, to deprive him of the good opinion of his fellow citizens.

Before this battery began to play upon general Wilkinson in Kentucky, colonel Burr was not idle in attempts to undermine his fidelity. This will manifestly appear by Burr's letter to him of the 12th December, 1805, [*Appendix, No. 18.*] wherein the writer says, "In case of such an event, (war with the Spaniards) *Lee would have been commander in chief; truth I assure you. He must, you know, come from Virginia." In this way, Wilkinson's military pride and honor was to be wounded; his resentment awakened; and then, the conspirators may have imagined, he would be ripe for any mischief. Burr knew Wilkinson too well to attempt his honor directly; he had received many proofs of the extent of Wilkinson's friendship, but he knew a dishonorable proposition would sever it forever. Unfeeling, base man! he sought by means the most insidious, to debauch this friend from his duty, to commit and destroy him, and all for the selfish gratification of his pride, his ambition and his revenge.

That this mode of assailing Wilkinson, by attacking his fame through the medium of the press, and wounding his sensibility as a soldier, by private insinuations, was relied on to fit him for Burr's purposes, will also appear by a letter from Jonathan Dayton, [*Appendix, No. 20.*] written in cypher to Wilkinson on the 24th July, 1806. Dayton says, "*It is now well ascertained that you are to be displaced in next session. Jefferson will affect to yield reluctantly to the public sentiment, but yield he will.*" Yet it does not appear, from any writing or act of Wilkinson, that the defamation of the press, or the attempted seductions of false friends, produced any effect upon his conduct, or shook his devotion to his country: On the contrary, he manifested the deepest anxiety to repel and put down, [by respectable testimonials of the confidence reposed in him by the Presidents, Washington and Adams,] the virulent slanders circulated by the "*Western World*;" and while Dayton and Burr were writing to him, to bias his mind from his duty, he was giving notice to government to keep an eye upon Burr, as a man whose movements might be inimical to the Union.

But in order to form a correct judgment of Wilkinson's conduct, previous to the detection of Burr, the rea-

*Meaning that distinguished officer of the revolution, general H. Lee.

der must forget all the glaring proofs of his guilt ; he must abstract himself from all the evidence produced on the trial at Richmond, and must place himself in the situation in which Wilkinson was, when Burr was only suspected. The period of that situation, (the year 1805,) as every one may recollect, was a season when our relations with Spain had assumed a hostile aspect. The prospect of a Spanish war had become a prominent subject of conversation among the citizens of the United States of all classes : There is nothing then very surprising in the circumstances, that such a man as colonel Burr should enter into discourse on this topic, or that he should make suppositions or conjectures relative to it. It is what any man might have done with perfect innocence, and without exciting a single unfavourable suspicion.

At St. Louis, in September, 1805, colonel Burr did converse with Wilkinson, on the subject of a Spanish war, and alluded to "some splendid enterprise," the particulars of which, he did not detail ; but on this occasion, he spoke expressly with reference to "the authority of the government." [*See captain Hughes' deposition, appendix, No. 17.*] Wilkinson, in reply, remarked, that it was his duty to obey the commands of government ; and when Burr put the question, whether an order from a minister (naming Mr. Gallatin) would be considered as a sufficient command, general Wilkinson answered him, "that an order from any gentleman of the administration, was always considered as an order from the President."* In all this, there was neither conspiracy nor treason. It was a conversation naturally growing out of the incidents of the times in which it was held ; and Wilkinson, from such discourse on the part of Burr, without the least acquaintance with any explanatory facts, was not immediately to suppose him a traitor ; nor could he, from these circumstances, attach to him any specific, unlawful design ; and if events, connecting themselves with the conversation at St. Louis, had not subsequently transpired, colonel Burr's observations would, very naturally, have been consigned to oblivion, as the suggestions of a momentary caprice, occurring in the warmth of an impatient mind, or produced by the fervor of a sublimated imagination.

A man, standing on Wilkinson's ground, who had been

* Burr then added, "that it was unnecessary to go into the details of a project, which might never be carried into effect." Wilkinson replied, he "had no curiosity to hear ;" and thus the conversation terminated.

an associate of Burr in treason, would have been prepared for the possibility of treachery against him, and however guilty, would have secured such proofs of his innocence, as could not have been overturned. Yet, of so peculiar a nature is truth ; so difficult is it to vitiate the real nature of facts, that the circumstances just narrated, the verification of which, has depended so much on accident, present a series of occurrences and undeniable vouchers, which prove their consistency, and defy the power of refutation.

Another letter, from colonel Burr to general Wilkinson, will be found in the Appendix, [No. 21.] dated the 6th January, 1806. That letter represents Burr as a welcome guest at the "*President's table*;" a circumstance which led to the belief, that he was still entertained by the first men of the country, on a friendly footing, and, of course, that he was not suspected of any sinister design. The general contents of this letter betray nothing of a traiterous understanding between the parties ; and the letter itself is such, as one friend might write to another, without the least criminality. On the 16th of April, 1806, Burr again addressed Wilkinson in cypher, and in his usual style of mystery. [See appendix, No. 22.] It has however already been seen, in the deposition of captain Hughes, that long before this date, Wilkinson had apprised a member of the administration, of an opinion he had formed with respect to colonel Burr, and had suggested the expediency of "keeping an eye upon him." But if there even existed no proof of such prior notification, the letter itself speaks decisively in favor of Wilkinson, notwithstanding the artful and inculpatory terms in which it is couched. "Nothing" (says Burr) "has been heard from brigadier since October ;" that is, nothing has been heard from brigadier general Wilkinson, by colonel Burr, since October, 1805, until the middle of April, 1806, a period of six months ; an acknowledgment, which goes to prove, that, with the extinction of the hope of procuring Burr a seat in Congress, Wilkinson's correspondence with him had declined.

There is another passage in this letter, wherein art overreaches itself, which proves how cunning may defeat its own purposes, and will serve as a solution of many similar artifices, practised by Burr to protect his letters against exposition. It was notorious, that those veterans of the revolution, colonel Cushing and major Porter, enjoyed

Wilkinson's confidence. Burr, therefore, introduces the following question into this letter: "Is Cushing and Porter right?" The implication of previous concert is here so strongly marked, that Burr felt he had secured Wilkinson's silence, and yet the inquiry was without reference to any specific object, and taken in the abstract, could not criminate the enquirer; but unhappily for this arch intriguer, Wilkinson had not been within three hundred miles of Porter, during the four preceding years, and at the very time the letter reached his hands, colonel Cushing embarked to reinforce the garrison of Natchitoches, under orders, which furnish a shield to Wilkinson's innocence, against all the calumnies of his accusers. [*See appendix, Nos. 24 and 25.*]

It has been seen from the evidence of colonel Burr's own pen, that Wilkinson had ceased to write to him; yet the general had endeavored, through other channels, to discover what his mysterious letters meant, of which, indubitable proof may be found in the following extract of a letter from general Adair, dated at Washington, January 27th, 1806. "You observe to me that I have seen colonel Burr, and ask me what was his business in the west. *Answer.* Only to avoid a prosecution in New York. Now, sir, you will oblige me by answering a question in turn, for I know you can. How far is it, and what kind of way from St. Louis to St. Afee, and from thence to Mexico? I was informed a few days past, and I believe the information to be correct, that both the ruling parties in the state of New York have made proposals to colonel Burr, offering to make a law pardoning all past, and to elect him governor, if he will return. He left this a few days past for the south, and will return before the session closes. Whether he will accede to the proposal or not, I am unable to tell." The events which have succeeded this communication, furnish a clue by which it may be interpreted, and shew that Wilkinson possessed neither the confidence of Burr nor of Adair, and that they were combined to use, but not to trust him. Such a letter from a Senator of the United States, a man in Wilkinson's confidence, on the spot with Burr, could not fail to remove any suspicion which might have found place in Wilkinson's breast. But on the receipt of Burr's last letter, of the 16th April, 1806, Wilkinson's doubts recurred, and he felt himself warranted to penetrate Burr's real designs by any means in his power. It was at this period he ad-

dressed a letter to Burr, calculated for the purpose and adapted to the occasion, the particulars of which he cannot recollect, as he kept no copy ; and it is not improbable that this letter drew from Burr, the mysterious, artful, deceptive communication, by Swartwout, which led to his discomfiture before his schemes were matured. And when Wilkinson reviews past scenes, he only regrets he had not played a deeper game of deception upon the deceiver, and at an earlier day.

But before the letter of the 16th April, could reach Wilkinson, who was then at St. Louis, the general was directing the movements of the army against the encroachments of the Spaniards, on our south-western frontier, which will presently be made to appear, by documents that cannot be questioned. Indeed, so ignorant was Burr of Wilkinson's situation or pursuits in midsummer, 1806, so entirely had all correspondence between them ceased, that on the 30th of July, of that year, more than nine months after his visit to St. Louis, colonel Burr, on his passage through Philadelphia, inquired of Mr. Gallatin, the secretary of the treasury, whether " Wilkinson had resigned, or been removed from the office of governor of Louisiana ?"

It is a fact, that Swartwout, Burr's messenger of corruption, with the cyphered letter in his pocket, proceeded from the falls of the Ohio to seek the general at St. Louis, and actually reached Kaskaskias, after a ride of more than two hundred miles, before he discovered that Wilkinson had descended the Mississippi, so little did Burr occupy his thoughts.

CHAPTER II.

THE best criterion of an officer's good conduct, is the promptitude with which he obeys his orders, and the ability with which he executes them. General Wilkinson has never refused to submit his actions to the test of this standard, and it is to that his adversaries ought to have resorted, instead of recurring to insinuations and reproaches ; but they dare not meet him on any fair ground ; and to insure his destruction, his accusers must become his judges.

Previously, however, to entering upon an analysis of Wilkinson's military transactions, immediately antecedent

to, and pending Burr's most active operations, it will be necessary, for the reader's more ready comprehension of the subject, that we should present certain facts in relation to the purchase of the province of Louisiana by the United States ; facts which are notorious, but the lively recollection of which, is essential to the unity of this examination. The American government, on the 30th April, 1803, purchased from the French Republic, all that extensive tract of country, known by the name of Louisiana, with such limits as it possessed, when France ceded it to Spain, in the year 1762 ; and these limits, according to the designation of the French government, on a former occasion, embraced a great portion of what is called West Florida, and were held to extend westward, as far as the Grand River, or Rio del Norte. It is a circumstance of deep regret, that this important purchase was not made under specific limits, and that the navigation of the great rivers, which penetrate the territory of the United States, from the Mexican Gulph, had not been secured ; because such provisions would have saved the expense of future negotiations, and it is possible, of future wars. However, under the terms of the convention of 1803, the United States conceived themselves entitled to the possession of the whole extent thus defined ; and perhaps there would have been no difficulty in the case, if there had not existed, on the part of the citizens of the United States, claims on the court of Madrid, to a considerable amount, for spoiliations committed on American property, captured by French privateers, and condemned by French tribunals, established within the proper jurisdiction of Spain. The government of the United States, in behalf of its citizens, enforced these claims, with considerable vigor ; but the court of Madrid, after having admitted the original justice of them, evaded the payment, under the legal maxim, that the accessory follows the principal ; and taking for granted that France was the principal, contended that all claims upon Spain for spoiliations, were merged in the provisions of the Louisiana convention. Whatever may have been the fact, it seems probable that this contest might have been instrumental in producing the caveat, on the part of Spain, against the extent of boundary claimed by the American government, under the purchase of Louisiana ; to sustain which, the court of Madrid advanced a military force, from the provinces of Mexico, into the disputed territory ; and the President of the United States, not rashly

seeking war, determined to assert the just and justly acquired rights of the nation.

Such was the state of things, when, on the 14th of March, 1806, a month before Burr's letter, of the 16th April, to Wilkinson, was written, and six months subsequent to Wilkinson's last letter to Burr, instructions were issued from the war department of the United States, [*Appendix, No. 23 A.*] directing the general to reinforce the posts on the lower Mississippi, by causing the troops in his neighborhood, excepting one full company, to descend the river to Fort Adams, at which post, or in its vicinity, they were to halt for further orders from the secretary of war; and on the 18th of the same month, another letter of instructions [*Appendix, 23 B.*] was transmitted to Wilkinson from the war department, directing colonel Cushing to proceed to Natchitoches without halt, with three companies, and that the residue of the troops, ordered from St. Louis, should take quarters at Fort Adams under lieutenant colonel Kingsbury. The order was promptly obeyed and the troops put in motion, under those highly meritorious, respectable officers, with the least delay possible. General Wilkinson's instructions to colonel Cushing of the 6th and 8th of May, 1806, [*See appendix, Nos. 24 and 25.*] will not be questioned in their military character, and they speak a language not to be mistaken; a language governed by sober reason, yet breathing an ardent attachment to his country, which cannot be perverted by the most malignant heart. These instructions will shew, that his arrangements were directed to the discharge of his duty and the success of the American arms, against those very Spaniards, of whom, at that time and since, he has been most foully represented as a pensioner. In this instance, Wilkinson did not confine himself to the letter of his instructions: He not only ordered colonel Cushing to press forward to the point of his destination, but directed lieutenant colonel Kingsbury to follow him with his detachment; and at the same time authorised the colonel to call to his support the troops on the lower waters of the Mississippi, should the pressure of circumstances make it necessary; and by this exercise of his discretion, he anticipated the dispositions of the executive, as he had done an hundred times before, during his military services under Washington, Adams and Jefferson, as is exemplified in these memoirs. Extracts from Wilkinson's letters to the secretary of war, on this

occasion, April 14th and 25th, 1806, [*Appendix, Nos. 26 and 27.*] will set forth his zeal and his attention to every branch of service.

But long before this period, general Wilkinson, though saddled with the government of the turbulent spirits aggregated in Louisiana, had directed a proper vigilance to our remote and feeble western frontier, which will be apparent from the perusal of a letter that he addressed to major Porter, the commanding officer at Natchitoches, our western advanced post, on the 11th July, 1805. [*See appendix, No. 28.*] In this letter, the general briefly, but strongly, inculcates caution and a strict maintenance of territorial rights; and in all his communications to that officer. [*Appendix, Nos. 29 and 30.*] his sentiments correspond with those of the purest patriotism. The more amply to elucidate the actual state of affairs in the quarter of Natchitoches, and to prove beyond cavil, that Wilkinson's conduct was in unison with the wishes and intentions of the executive, the reader is referred to the correspondence between major Porter and the secretary of war, to be found in the appendix. [*Nos. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 36; A. 37, 38, 39, 40.*] The general had received letters from major Porter of the 29th January and 4th of March, 1806, [*Appendix, Nos. 41 and 42.*] which last was the cause of his urging colonel Cushing to quicken his movement. The answer of the general to these letters of major Porter, [*No. 43.*] exhibits a mind intent on its duty, but perfectly at ease, without a symptom of disaffection to his government or his country.

Here let us pause and examine Wilkinson's situation. If he had been leagued with Burr for the subversion of the American Union or the revolution of the Mexican provinces, these dispositions from the war department, taken without his privity and at a thousand miles distance, put it in his power, without the possibility of detection, to have secured Burr's game. It has been asserted by some, that Burr was acting in concert with the Spaniards, for the recovery of Louisiana, and the severance of the Union; in that case, instead of accelerating the movement and assembly of a competent, opposing force at Natchitoches, by every practicable means, Wilkinson, by confining himself to the letter of his instructions, could have checked lieutenant colonel Kingsbury's movement at Fort Adams, and withheld from colonel Cushing the authority to call the whole force on the lower waters of

the Mississippi to his assistance, and thus have favored the attack of the Spaniards ; but if, on the contrary, as has been alledged by Burr's associates,* and is believed generally, he looked to a war with the Spaniards as the guarantee of his sinister projects, by the excitements it would produce, in Kentucky and Tennessee, on the public mind ; then Wilkinson had nought to do, understanding as he did the orders from the war department to major Porter, but to have said to Cushing, "move as expeditiously as possible, with all the force you can collect, to Natchitoches, and on arriving there, make the orders you may find in possession of major Porter the rule of your conduct, assert the rights and protect the territory of your country." The infallible effect would have been an immediate attack upon Herrera, and the great probability is (from the vast inferiority of our force, on the colonel's arrival at Natchitoches) we should have been beaten ; but whether victorious or defeated, the sword would have been drawn, blood would have been spilt ; Burr stood ready with his organized corps ; and then, it is verily believed, "the government could not have stopped the western people" from flying to the succour of their brethren, and thus scenes would have been opened, the end of which no eye could foresee. But what was the conduct of Wilkinson ? Let attention be given to the solution ! Review his order to colonel Cushing, and it will be found, that while he sedulously guarded the interest and the honor of his country, he cautiously interdicted any unnecessary appeal to arms ; and that this salutary caution led to the fortunate issue of events on the side of Natchitoches, is exemplified by the following fact. On the march of the Spaniards to the east of the Sabine, governor Claiborne felt it his duty to repair to the point of invasion : He there found colonel Cushing with an handful of troops, and being provoked by the encroachment of the Spanish force upon the territory of his immediate jurisdiction, he urged colonel Cushing to repel them by arms : The colonel, with that cool, considerate, determined conduct, which marks all his actions, was waiting

* General Adair, when he arrived at the mouth of the Pascagola river, on his way to New Orleans, to adjust with general Wilkinson, the surrender of the place to Burr, being asked by doctor White, who resided there, whether any thing was really intended by Burr, replied, "why, something would have been done, if Wilkinson had not turned out a damned coward, for if he had attacked the Spaniards, and the blood of one man had been spilt, the government could not have stopped the western people."

for the reinforcement under Lt. col. Kingsbury, and preparing for the ultimate appeal ; he parried the governor's proposition, which was founded on the instructions of the war department to major Porter, and finally exhibited to him, his orders from general Wilkinson, with the propriety of which, the governor acquiesced, and the attack was postponed. Here then the precaution and judgment of Wilkinson saved the country from war, and baffled the leading hopes of the conspirators, who are now hunting him with inexorable vengeance.

On the 11th of June, 1806, general Wilkinson received instructions from the secretary of war [*Appendix, No. 44.*] to repair to the territory of Orleans or its vicinity, and "take the command of the troops in that quarter, together with such militia or volunteers as might turn out for the defence of the country, and by all means to repel any invasion of the country east of the river Sabine, or north or west of the bounds of what has been called West Florida ; and in case of actual hostilities being committed by the subjects of his Catholic majesty, on the above described territory, or of any actual attempt to invade any part of said territory, to repel force by force to the utmost extent ; and take possession of such parts or places as might, in his opinion, most effectually counteract the hostile views or obvious intention of the invaders." This order, in general, confided to general Wilkinson a most delicate trust ; the power of making war and conquests, under particular circumstances ; and the mode in which he executed it, will fully justify the good opinion the President must have entertained of his understanding and discretion, anterior to the date of these executive arrangements. The general, with his habitual vigilance, had authorised major Porter to reinforce himself in case of exigency, [*Appendix, No. 45.*] and in this conduct, nothing can be discovered, analogous to the character and dispositions of a traitor.

When general Wilkinson received the orders to descend the Mississippi, he was surrounded by deputations from various Indian nations, inhabiting the country of the Mississippi and Missouri ; a pressure of territorial business engaged his attention ; and intelligence received from the western frontier justified his opinion, that the Spaniards intended no serious operation. The letter of major Porter, June 7th, 1806, [*No. 46.*] to the secretary of war, and that of colonel Cushing, July 31st, of the

same year, [No. 47.] evince that no apprehension of immediate hostilities was, at those periods, entertained. Such indications of tranquillity, authorized general Wilkinson to devote some time, to the essential interests of the territory over which he presided, and, also, to the imperious claims of the Indian department. His letter to the secretary of war, of the 2d of August, 1806, [No. 48.] is submitted to the reader without comment.

In descending the Mississippi, general Wilkinson found it his duty to call at the Arkansaw settlement, to give attention to its civil concerns, and also to inhibit certain intrusions on the public lands, which he understood were meditated, and he did not reach Natchez until the 7th September; from this place, he wrote the secretary of war the next day, [Appendix, No. 49.] in a style which portrays feelings and opinions, as rigidly scrupulous of his country's interests and character, its dignity and honor, as the most scrutinizing judges of human affections can require; and it may be added, that while this letter displays the patriotism of the citizen, it does not derogate from the capacity of the soldier. Could the head which dictated, or the heart that approved such a communication, to the national executive, have been corrupted by defection or polluted by the poisons of treason? Or does Wilkinson, in this exposition of his purposes, betray any sinister inclination to the interests of Spain? The fact is, that the decisive arrangements which he adopted, outstript the views of the executive, and his plans were counteracted by subsequent orders. If connected with Burr, he would have written him from this point of his march, but his letter from St. Louis, in May, was the last Burr ever received from his pen, and at the time of writing the secretary of war from Natchez, Wilkinson had not even thought of Burr for months.

General Wilkinson proceeded from Natchez for Natchitoches, on the 9th of Sept.; and at Fort Adams he received a letter from col. Cushing of the 30th Aug. covering his correspondence with the Spanish commander, which produced another letter to the secretary of war, of the 12th September, from which the following extract is taken: "The aspect of colonel Cushing's last letter, has determined me to call for the mounted men from this territory, as it will take them ten days to prepare for the March; in the interval, I shall be able to ascertain the designs of the Spaniards, and should the event justify it, I may remand

the militia without incurring expense ; on the contrary, should colonel Herrera pertinaciously adhere to his resolution, and continue to invade the tract of country east of the Sabine, this auxiliary force will be at hand for co-operation ; I shall then endeavor, if his conduct should not be too provoking, by making a feint towards Nacogdoches, to oblige him either to retreat to the westward of the Sabine or to attack me ; for, although, utterly irreconcilable to my military creed, so deeply solicitous am I to evince to the whole world, my reluctance to break the peace of my country, and commence the effusion of human blood, that I am determined to wait the attack, and yield the advantage of the first blow to my antagonist, if it can be suffered without too much hazard." Such was the caution, the vigilance and the solicitude with which Wilkinson watched over the character and interests of the nation ; and but for this judicious forbearance, which without yielding a tittle, obtained every thing, the sword would have been drawn, and Burr's plans would have succeeded ; but these, and a thousand other services, have been forgotten, and the author of them has been sacrificed to popular clamour, founded on declamation and calumnies. Ah, deluded Americans ! Reflect upon what you owe to your own character, and to personal justice, before it may be too late. Shun alike the poisons of *baneful precedents*, and the dangers of *constructive* rights.

In his route up the Red river, Wilkinson fell in with governor Claiborne at Rapide, and having adjusted with him the necessary arrangements, for the prompt assemblage of the militia of the western counties of the territory of Orleans, and again written to the secretary of war, he pressed forward to Natchitoches, where he arrived on the 24th of September. He did not lose a moment's time, but, on the same day, addressed a letter to governor Cordero, who was reported to be the Spanish commander in chief on the frontier of Texas, [*Appendix, No. 50.*] in which the territorial rights of the Union are asserted, and the Spanish troops are required to retire from the tract they occupied. This letter, and the correspondence which ensued, bear favorable testimony to Wilkinson's character and understanding. His letters were not founded on a foreknowledge of their probable effects, but flowing spontaneously from the head and heart, at a moment when imperious duty dictated to inclination a decisive line of conduct ; they cannot be mis-

taken for the fabrications of a man acting under the guidance of cunning, and composing letters to answer a controversial or exculpatory purpose.

The letter of the 29th September, from governor Cordero to the general, [*No.* 51.] that of Wilkinson in reply, [*No.* 52.] the letter from Cordero of the 2d of October, [*No.* 53.] Wilkinson's answer of the 8th October, [*No.* 54.] Cordero's letter of the 11th, [*No.* 55.] 21st [*No.* 56.] and 24th of October, [*No.* 57.] Wilkinson's of the 29th and 30th October, [*Nos.* 58 and 59.] Salcedo's letter to Wilkinson of the 12th October, [*No.* 60.] that from Cordero of November, 1st, [*No.* 61.] Wilkinson to Cordero of November 4th, [*No.* 62.] and that from governor Herrera to Wilkinson of the 5th November, 1806, [*No.* 63.] will present to the reader a rapid sketch of the progress and issue, of general Wilkinson's operations in the quarter of the Sabine, a circumstantial detail of which, will be found in these memoirs.

It is not in the spirit of arrogance, nor with the least intention to derogate from the worth and intelligence, of governor Claiborne and colonel Cushing, that their correspondence with governor Harrara is introduced in the appendix, [*Nos.* 63, 64, 65, 66.] but to exhibit the superior success of Wilkinson's negotiations with the Spaniards; for it will not be denied, that his arrival at Natchitoches, and the temperate but decisive tone he assumed, gave a new complexion to affairs in that quarter, and converted the haughtiness of the Dons into a temper the most conciliatory.

A variety of evidences might be here introduced, to evince the ardor with which Wilkinson devoted himself to the service of his country on this occasion, but they belong to another place, and would swell this volume unnecessarily; for no one can doubt from the documents already referred to, that he was engaged, soul and body, to get rid of the Spaniards on the best terms practicable, that he might turn about and carry his arms to a point of greater importance. We will however, offer one letter from the general to colonel Freeman, September 12th, 1806, [*No.* 67.] and another from the same to governor Claiborne, October 12th, 1806, [*No.* 68.] further to illustrate the cares and interests which occupied his mind.

CHAPTER III.

WE now approach more immediately to that part of Burr's operations, in which general Wilkinson took a decisive part against the conspirators. The deposition of colonel Cushing, which follows, will explain the manner in which Wilkinson received the first unequivocal indication of Burr's designs, and at the same time prove the promptitude with which he resolved to oppose them.

Deposition of Colonel Cushing.

ON or about the 8th of October, 1806, I was sitting at the dining table, in my quarters at Natchitoches, with general Wilkinson, when a gentleman entered the room, and inquired for colonel Cushing, I rose to receive him, and he presented to me the letter from general Dayton, of which the following is an exact copy, viz.

“ ELIZABETHTOWN, N. J. *July 27, 1806.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ THIS will be presented to you by my nephew, a son of the late general Matthias Ogden, who commanded one of the Jersey regiments in the revolutionary war, and whom you probably recollect. He is on his way to New Orleans, and is advised by me to call at your post, if it should be Fort Adams or elsewhere upon the Mississippi, as I am told it is. His merits, and the esteem in which he is held by me, make me anxious to procure for him a welcome reception, even for the short stay of a few hours, that he will be able to make with you.

“ Any instance of friendly attention or assistance shewn to him, and his very worthy companion, Mr. Swartwout, will be gratefully acknowledged, and regarded as a favor conferred on, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

And very humble servant,

(Signed)

JONA: DAYTON.”

Colonel Cushing.

The gentleman informed me that he was the Mr. Swartwout mentioned in the letter, and I presented him to general Wilkinson as the friend of general Dayton, and requested him to take a seat with us at table, which he did.

Mr. Swartwout then observed, that Mr. Ogden and himself being on their way to New Orleans, had learned at Fort Adams, that our troops and some militia were assembling at Natchitoches, from whence they were to march against the Spanish army, then in our neighborhood, and that the object of his visit, was to act with us as a volunteer. He remained with us some time, and conversed on various topics, but said nothing which could excite a suspicion against him ; and he left us with a strong impression, on my mind, that his business to New Orleans was of a commercial nature, and could be conducted by Mr. Ogden during his absence. While he was in my quarters, I was called out on business, and was absent from five to ten minutes.

The next morning I was walking on the gallery, in front of my quarters, when general Wilkinson came up, and taking me aside, informed me that he had something of a serious nature to communicate to me. So much so, that although it was necessary to hold it in strict reserve for the present, he begged me to bear it in mind, that I might be able to make a fair statement of it at any future period. He then asked me if I knew, or had heard of an enterprize being on foot in the western states? I replied, that I had heard nothing on the subject ; and asked him what the enterprize was, to which he alluded? He then said, " yes, my friend," a great number of individuals possessing wealth, popularity and talents, are, at this moment, associated for purposes inimical to the government of the United States: colonel Burr is at their head, and the young gentleman who delivered you the letter last evening, is one of his emissaries. The story of serving as a volunteer, is only a masque. He has brought me a letter from colonel Burr, which, being in cypher, I have not yet been able fully to make out, but I have discovered that his object is treasonable, and that it is my duty to oppose him by every means in my power. He assures me that he has funds ; says the navy are with him ; offers to make me second in command, and to give the officers of the army anything I may ask for them ; and he requests me to send a confidential friend to confer with him at Nashville, in Tennessee. In fact, he seems to calculate on me and the army as ready to join him. I then asked the general, whether he had received any information or instruction on this subject from government? to which he replied, that he had not, and that he must therefore adopt such

measures as, in his judgment, were best calculated to defend the country. He said he would immediately march to the Sabine, and endeavor to make such terms with the Spanish commander, as would justify him in removing the greater part of his force to the Mississippi; and that the moment this should be effected, he would send me to New Orleans in a light barge, with orders to secure the French train of artillery at that post, and to put the place in the best possible situation for defence, and that he would follow, with every man that could be spared from Natchitoches, with all possible expedition. He told me that he would give the information he had received, to the President of the United States, and solicit particular instructions for his government, but as delay might prove ruinous, he would pursue the course before suggested, as the only means in his power to save the country, until the pleasure of the President could be known. On our march to the Sabine, the general told me that he thought his presence at New Orleans at as early a period as possible, was absolutely necessary, and that the moment he could make terms with the Spanish commander, he would set out for that place, and leave me to bring on the troops.

(Signed)

T. H. CUSHING,

Col. 2d Reg. In. and Adj. and Insp. of the Army.

NATCHITOCHES, Nov. 15, 1806.

SWORN to, before me, at the city of New Orleans, this 20th day of May, 1807.

(Signed)

GEORGE POLLOCK,

Justice of the Peace for the Parish of Orleans.

It will be observed that Burr's letter by Swartwout reached Wilkinson, before the latter had adjusted matters with the Spaniards; and that, notwithstanding appearances justified the strongest suspicion, that Burr was proceeding contrary to law, yet there was a possibility that his project against the Spaniards, under the circumstances of the time, might be connived at by the government of the United States. In writing to the President, therefore, on the 20th of October, 1806, [*No. 69.*] Wilkinson remarks, "It is unknown under what authority this enterprize has been projected; from whence, the means of its support is derived; or what may be the intentions of its leaders, in relation to the territory of Orleans; but it is believed that

the maritime co-operation, will depend on a British squadron from the West Indies, under the ostensible command of American masters." This language is not equivocal, although it has been sophisticated by quibbles and distortions, unworthy a candid mind or an honest man. Wilkinson could not comprehend that an individual, unsupported by any but his own means, would undertake to excite a rebellion in the bowels of the nation; he looked therefore, to the protection of some governmental authority, internal or external; and Burr, the more effectually to beguile him, assured him of British co-operation. Wilkinson believed Burr to be the agent, not the author, of the plot; and he knew, also, that he possessed no independent means of his own to carry it into execution.

In another letter to the President, of the 21st October, 1806, [*See appendix, No. 70.*] the perplexity and embarrassment of Wilkinson's mind is strongly portrayed: "*It is my desire (says he) to avert a great public calamity, and not to mar a salutary design;*" that is, if the project be opposed to government, I shall resist it; if otherwise I shall not. Again he emphatically remarks, "*I have never, in my whole life, found myself under such circumstances of perplexity and embarrassment as at present; for I am not only uninformed of the prime mover and ultimate objects of this daring enterprize, but am ignorant of the foundation on which it rests, of the means by which it is supported, and whether any immediate or collateral protection internal or external is expected.*" Here again we have a striking manifestation of Wilkinson's doubts and anxiety. He could not consider colonel Burr "the prime mover" of the enterprize, nor the "foundation on which it rested;" and the ultimate objects of the sinister projects, were carefully concealed from him, under the pretence of an invasion of Mexico, in secret concert with the British marine in the West Indies; pretensions equally fallacious, and designed to bias Wilkinson, and beguile the citizens of the Ohio.

It appears that a sense of duty prevailed over the strongest impulses of affection, backed by every seductive artifice cunning could devise; Wilkinson resolved upon the measures to be adopted, and urged them with unrelaxed vigor, in concerting and contriving means for a resolute resistance of the conspirators. Upon the receipt of the information from James Lowry Donaldson, esquire, on the 6th of November, [*Appendix, No. 71.*] his doubts

were removed; and his correspondence with the President, from the 12th of that month to the 13th April 1807, [*Appendix, No. 72 to 90.*] inclusive, evinces an active fidelity to the American Union, which cannot fail to make a durable impression in General Wilkinson's favor on every mind that is not abandoned to prejudice or lost to candor. He thus throws before the world his most confidential thoughts committed to paper amidst dangers and perplexities: and it will be difficult, if not impossible, for any person to resist the evidence they furnish, in vindication of the general's character, from the cloud of calumnies and aspersions, with which his enemies have incessantly labored to overwhelm him for three years past. One letter from the President, bearing date the 3d February, 1807, we think proper to separate from the rest and insert in this place, because it puts Wilkinson's situation and conduct in a very strong, clear, and interesting point of view.

WASHINGTON, *February 3d. 1807.*

SIR,

A RETURNING express gives me an opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your letters, of the 12th November, 9th, 14th, 18th, 25th and 26th December, and 2nd January; I wrote to you January 3d, and through Mr. Briggs, January 10th. The former being written while the secretary of war was unable to attend to business, gave you the state of the information we then possessed as to Burr's conspiracy; I now enclose you a message containing a complete history of it from the commencement down to the eve of his departure from Nashville, and two subsequent messages shewed that he began his descent of the Mississippi, January 1st, with 10 boats from 80 to 100 men of his party, navigated by 60 oarsmen not at all of his party. This I think is fully the force with which he will be able to meet your gunboats, and as I think he was uninformed of your proceedings, and could not get the information till he would reach Natchez, I am in hopes that before this date he is in your possession. Although we at no time believed he could carry any formidable force out of the Ohio, yet we thought it safest that you should be prepared to receive him, with all the force which could be assembled, and with that view our orders were given; *and we were pleased to see that without waiting for them, you adopted*

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nearly the same plan yourself, and acted on it with promptitude ; the difference between your's and our's, proceeding from your expecting an attack by sea, which we knew impossible either by England or by a fleet under Truxton, who was at home, or by our own navy which was under our own eye. Your belief, that Burr would really descend with 6 or 7000 men, was no doubt founded in what you knew of the numbers which could be raised in the western country, for an expedition to Mexico, *under the authority of the government* ; but you probably did not calculate that the want of that authority, would take from him every honest man, and leave him only the desperados of his party, which in no part of the United States can ever be a numerous body. *In approving therefore, as we do approve of the defensive operations for New Orleans, we are obliged to estimate them not according to our own view of the danger, but to place ourselves in your situation and only with your information.* Your sending here Swartwout and Bollman, and adding to them Burr, Blannerhasset and Tyler, should they fall into your hands, will be supported by the public opinion ; as to Alexander who is arrived and Ogden expected, the evidence yet received will not be sufficient to commit them. I hope however you will not extend this deportation to persons against whom there is only suspicion, or shades of offence not strongly marked, in that case I fear the public sentiment would desert you ; because seeing no danger here, violations of law are felt with strength. I have thought it just to give you these views of the sentiments and sensations here, as they may enlighten your path. I am thoroughly sensible of the painful difficulties of your situation, expecting an attack from an overwhelming force, unversed in law, surrounded by suspected persons, and in a nation tender as to every thing infringing liberty, and especially from the military. You have doubtless seen a good deal of malicious insinuation in the papers against you, this of course begat suspicion and distrust in those unacquainted with the line of your conduct, we, who knew it, have not failed to strengthen the public confidence in you, and I can assure you that your conduct as now known, has placed you on ground extremely favorable with the public. Burr and his emissaries found it convenient to sow a distrust in your mind of our dispositions towards you, but be assured that you will be cordially supported in the line of your duties. I pray you

to send me B—'s original letter, communicated through Briggs by the first entirely safe conveyance.

Accept my friendly salutations and assurances of esteem and respect.

(Signed)

TH: JEFFERSON.

No less interesting to the reader will be the annexed* authentic summary, of the progress of Burr's machina-

* *Extract from the President's Message, of the 22d January, 1807.*

Some time in the latter part of September, I received intimations that designs were in agitation in the Western country, unlawful, and unfriendly to the peace of the Union; and that the prime mover in these, was Aaron Burr, heretofore distinguished by the favor of his country. The grounds of these intimations being inconclusive, the objects uncertain, and the fidelity of that country known to be firm, the only measure taken, was to urge the informants to use their best endeavors to get further insight into the designs and proceedings of the suspected persons, and to communicate them to me.

It was not till the latter part of October, that the objects of the conspiracy began to be perceived; but still so blended, and involved in mystery, that nothing distinct could be singled out for pursuit. In this state of uncertainty, as to the crime contemplated, the acts done, and the legal course to be pursued, I thought it best to send to the scene, where these things were principally in transaction, a person in whose integrity, understanding and discretion, entire confidence could be reposed; with instructions to investigate the plots going on, to enter into conference (for which he had sufficient credentials) with the governors and all other officers, civil and military, and, with their aid, to do on the spot whatever should be necessary to discover the designs of the conspirators, arrest their means, bring their persons to punishment, and to call out the force of the country to suppress any unlawful enterprize, in which it should be found they were engaged. By this time it was known that many boats were under preparation, stores of provisions collecting, and an unusual number of suspicious characters in motion on the Ohio, and its waters. Besides dispatching the confidential agent to that quarter, orders were, at the same time, sent to the governors of the Orleans and Mississippi territories, and to the commanders of the land and naval forces there, to be on their guard against surprise, and in constant readiness to resist any enterprize which might be attempted on the vessels, posts or other objects under their care: and on the 8th of November, instructions were forwarded to general Wilkinson, to hasten an accommodation with the Spanish commandant on the Sabine, and as soon as that was effected, to fall back with his principal force to the hither bank of the Mississippi, for the defence of the interesting points on that river. By a letter received from that officer on the twenty-fifth of November, but dated October twenty-first, we learnt that a confidential agent of Aaron Burr, had been deputed to him, with communications, partly written in cypher, and partly oral, explaining his designs, exaggerating his resources, and making such offers of emolument and command, to engage him and the army in his unlawful enterprizes, as he had flattered himself would be successful. The general, with the honor of a soldier, and fidelity of a good citizen, immediately dispatched a trusty officer to me, with information of what had passed, proceeded to establish such an understanding with the Spanish commandant on the Sabine, as permitted him to withdraw his force across the Mississippi, and to enter on measures for opposing the projected enterprize.

tions, and the means he employed to ensure their success. This document corroborates the observations contained in the preceding letter of the President; and, under the circumstances by which he was surrounded, justifies the

The general's letter, which came to hand on the twenty-fifth of November, as has been mentioned, and some other information received a few days earlier, when brought together, developed Burr's general designs, different parts of which, only had been revealed to different informants. It appeared that he contemplated two distinct objects, which might be carried on either jointly or separately, and either the one or the other first, as circumstances should direct. One of these was the severance of the Union of these states, by the Allegany mountains; the other an attack on Mexico. A third object was provided, merely ostensible, to wit: the settlement of a pretended purchase of a tract of country on the Washita, claimed by a baron Bastrop. This was to serve as the pretext for all his preparations, an allurements for such followers as really wished to acquire settlements in that country, and a cover under which to retreat in the event of a final discomfiture of both branches of his real design.

He found at once that the attachment of the western country to the present Union, was not to be shaken; that its dissolution could not be effected with the consent of its inhabitants, and that his resources were inadequate, as yet, to effect it by force. He took his course then at once, determined to seize on New Orleans, plunder the bank there, possess himself of the military and naval stores, and proceed on his expedition to Mexico; and to this object all his means and preparations were now directed. He collected from all the quarters where himself or his agents possessed influence, all the ardent, restless, desperate and disaffected persons, who were ready for any enterprize analogous to their characters. He seduced good and well meaning citizens, some by assurances that he possessed the confidence of the government, and was acting under its secret patronage; a pretence which procured some credit from the state of our differences with Spain; and others by offers of land in Bastrop's claim on the Washita.

This was the state of my information of his proceedings, about the last of November; at which time therefore, it was first possible to take specific measures to meet them. The proclamation of November 27th, two days after the receipt of general Wilkinson's information, was now issued. Orders were dispatched to every interesting point on the Ohio and Mississippi, from Pittsburg to New Orleans, for the employment of such force, either of the regulars or of the militia, and of such proceedings also of the civil authorities, as might enable them to seize on all boats and stores provided for the enterprize, to arrest the persons concerned, and to suppress effectually the further progress of the enterprize. A little before the receipt of these orders in the state of Ohio, our confidential agent, who had been diligently employed in investigating the conspiracy, had acquired sufficient information to open himself to the governor of that state, and to apply for the immediate exertion of the authority and power of the state, to crush the combination. Governor Tiffin and the legislature, with a promptitude, an energy, and patriotic zeal, which entitle them to a distinguished place in the affection of their sister states, effected the seizure of all the boats, provisions, and other preparations within their reach; and thus gave a first blow, materially disabling the enterprize in its outset.

In Kentucky, a premature attempt to bring Burr to justice, without sufficient evidence for his conviction, had produced a popular impression in his favor, and a general disbelief of his guilt. This gave him an unfortunate opportunity of hastening his equipments. The arrival of the procla-

apprehensions of general Wilkinson. It proves, also, that the Presidential proclamation, of the 27th of November, was issued on the second day after the receipt of the general's letter of the 21st of October, to which it may be honestly ascribed; and thus it appears that the death blow given to Burr's plots on the Ohio, was founded on Wilkinson's information to the executive; whilst he was, at the same time, straining every nerve, to be prepared for the reception of the traitor on the Mississippi: and however the ignorant, the invidious, and the prejudiced may

mation and orders, and the application and information of our confidential agent, at length awakened the authorities of that state to the truth, and then produced the same promptitude and energy, of which the neighboring state had set the example. Under an act of their legislature, of December twenty-third, militia was instantly ordered to different important points, and measures taken for doing whatever could yet be done. Some boats (accounts vary, from five to double or treble that number) and persons (differently estimated, from one to three hundred) had, in the mean time, passed the falls of Ohio, to rendezvous at the mouth of Cumberland, with others expected down that river.

Not apprized, till very late, that any boats were building on Cumberland, the effect of the proclamation had been trusted to, for some time, in the state of Tennessee; but on the nineteenth of December, similar communications and instructions, with those to the neighboring states, were dispatched, by express, to the governor, and a general officer of the western division of the state; and on the twenty-third of December, our confidential agent left Frankfort for Nashville, to put into activity the means of that state also. But by information received yesterday, I learn that on the twenty-second of December, Mr. Burr descended the Cumberland, with two boats, merely of accommodation, carrying from that state no quota towards his unlawful enterprize. Whether after the arrival of the proclamation, of the orders, or of our agent, any exertion which could be made by that state, or the orders of the governor of Kentucky for calling out the militia at the mouth of Cumberland, would be in time to arrest these boats, and those from the falls of Ohio, is still doubtful.

On the whole, the fugitives from the Ohio, with their associates from Cumberland, or any other place in that quarter, cannot threaten serious danger to the city of New Orleans.

By the same express, of December 19th, orders were sent to the governors of Orleans and Mississippi, supplementary to those which had been given on the 25th of November, to hold the militia of their territories in readiness to co-operate for their defence, with the regular troops and armed vessels, then under command of general Wilkinson. Great alarm indeed was excited at New Orleans, by the exaggerated accounts of Mr. Burr, disseminated through his emissaries, of the armies and navies he was to assemble there. General Wilkinson had arrived there himself on the 24th of November, and had immediately put into activity the resources of the place, for the purpose of its defence; and on the 10th of December, he was joined by his troops from the Sabine. Great zeal was shewn by the inhabitants generally; the merchants of the place readily agreeing to the most laudable exertions and sacrifices for manning the armed vessels with their seamen; and the other citizens manifesting unequivocal fidelity to the Union, and a spirit of determined resistance to their expected assailants.

laugh at the danger after it has passed, spectators at the scenes of defection, will acknowledge, and evidence might be brought to sustain the fact, that if this proclamation had been suspended two weeks longer, Burr would have moved with six or eight hundred men, and with this force increasing in its progress, and reinforced by more than one thousand of his associates, in the Mississippi territory and New Orleans, he could have used the slaves at his discretion, and the mischiefs to be apprehended, would have been co-extensive with his desperation. Burr's strength in the Mississippi territory,* and at New Orleans, (in which last place five hundred and fifty-five persons, generally young men, without visible occupation,

** The Report of Lieutenant T. A. Smith, of the United States' Artillerists, given at New Orleans, January, 1807.*

As I passed through the Choctaw nation I was overtaken by colonel M^cKee, who informed me he set out for the Chickasaw Bluffs; that on his way he was astonished to find an express under the pay of the United States, with a letter from colonel Burr to himself, with orders to go to him wherever he might be and deliver it; he also mentioned his having a letter for the secretary of war. The colonel appeared desirous to reach Bruinsburgh as soon as possible, and mentioned that he expected to see colonel Burr. He, while conversing with me, appeared to be at a loss, what could be his (Burr's) object. He expressed surprise at the story's gaining belief, that he intended to plunder New Orleans, and gave as a reason, that he did not think there were men so abandoned in the United States as to attempt it. When we arrived at Gibson's port, the colonel left me to go to Bruinsburgh, near which place colonel Burr then lay. Colonel Wooldridge, commanding officer of the county, informed me that a number of persons from the neighbourhood had called to see colonel Burr as soon as his arrival was announced, and that he told so plausible a story, that they returned, being much pleased with him; he was ordered by Mr. Mead to march the whole force of the country down to where colonel Burr's boats then lay, and make him a prisoner; he was astonished to find that only thirty-five men would turn out on the occasion. I saw a number of militia on my way through the upper counties of the Mississippi territory; the greater part of those with whom I conversed declared they wished colonel Burr's plans might take effect, and declared if he was only at Baton Rouge they would join him. Colonel Wooldridge informed me that Burr had, in a conversation with him, declared his intention was to take the Floridas and not New Orleans, as had been represented by general Wilkinson.

I learnt, while in Natchez, that colonel Burr had, through colonel Fitzpatrick, proposed to Mr. Mead to give himself up to the civil authority, provided he could have a trial in the territory. He declared that sooner than be delivered to general Wilkinson, or sent round to Washington city for trial, he would defend himself while he had a man living. It was further understood that if colonel Burr, could not convince Mr. Mead, that his intentions or plans were not inimical to the government, he was to be placed in the same situation as when he gave himself up.

(Signed)

T. A. SMITH

were assembled at the time,) may be best determined by lieutenant Smith's certificate and the violence and virulence, with which Wilkinson was abused at the period, and the spirit of persecution with which he has been since pursued.

Among the numerous proofs we possess, that Wilkinson was not connected with Burr, it is not the least conclusive, that the colonel should have resorted to the Ouachita project, not only as "a pretext to all his preparations and a lure to the ignorant," but as a ground of exculpation in case of the failure of his enterprize ; for if Burr had been assured of Wilkinson's co-operation, the pains which it has appeared he took, to give plausibility and consistency to the Ouachita fiction, would have been unnecessary, because, the army with him, and his success against New Orleans was infallible, with or without auxiliaries from above.

Still further to strengthen the vindication of general Wilkinson, the subjoined instructions under date of 27th November, 1806, from the war department, are introduced ; they will be found to correspond with the energetic course pursued by Wilkinson at New Orleans ; and this conduct was so much the more honorable to him that, being left many months without a syllable of orders or instructions from his government, he acted on his own judgment and discretion, and anticipated the views of the executive whom he was bound to obey.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *November 27th, 1806.*

SIR,

YOU will please to direct the stations of the armed vessels in the Mississippi and lake Pontchartrain, in such manner as you may judge most advantageous under existing circumstances : and if your arrangements with the Spaniards will permit you to withdraw from the frontier with some part of the troops, you will please to take post at such places and dispose of the troops in such manner, as will most effectually intercept and prevent any unlawful enterprize, either on New Orleans or elsewhere, and at all events, you will use every exertion in your power to frustrate and effectually prevent any enterprize, which has for its objects, directly or indirectly, any hostile act on any part of the territories of the United States, or any of the territories of the king of Spain.

I have agreed with the French minister for the brass ordnance at New Orleans, belonging to France, and expect by the next mail to forward an order for its delivery with the apparatus belonging to it.

Any person or persons who may be found in or about your camp or post, with evident intention of sounding either officer or soldier, with a view to an unlawful expedition, should be arrested, and, if not amenable to military law, be delivered over to the civil authority, to be dealt with as the law directs, particularly the law for punishing any persons who shall be concerned, in any manner, in providing, aiding or assisting, in any enterprize against a foreign power, with whom the United States are not at war; and at present any enterprize, contemplated or fitting out against any part of the territory of the king of Spain, comes fully within the provisions of said law.

Before this reaches, you will undoubtedly have received my despatches of the 8th and 10th instant.

I hope you have convinced the Spanish governor, that, with the most pacific dispositions on our part, we nevertheless cannot tamely brook violations of our territorial rights; and that you will be at leisure to oppose any wild and extravagant enterprizes from our own citizens.

It has been thought too late to attempt any new establishments, for impeding the progress of any adventurers down the Mississippi; but orders have been given to the commanding officers of our different posts, from Pittsburg to New Orleans, and measures taken for seizing any vessels or boats that may be on the Ohio, in pursuance of the President's proclamation.

There can be no doubt but colonel Burr is generally considered at the head; but his real object has been so covered, as to prevent any conclusive evidence of his ultimate views. Your name has very frequently been associated with Burr, Dayton and others; and the new edition of the Old Stories, lately published in Kentucky, served to increase the suspicions now in circulation.

I am very respectfully, Sir, your obedient servt,

H. DEARBORN.

P. S. Enclosed herewith is the President's proclamation to which you will please to give due attention.

GEN. J. WILKINSON.

Another letter from the secretary of War, of 21st January, 1807, will serve as an illustration of the entire harmony, and accord in principle and action, between the executive of the United States at Washington and general Wilkinson at New Orleans:

WAR DEPARTMENT, *Jan. 21st, 1807.*

SIR,

YOUR despatches by Mr. B. of the 14th of November, did not reach this place until the 29th of December. Your communications by water under the care of Mr. D. were received on the 12th instant. Previous to the date of your despatches on the 9th ultimo, you ought to have received my letters of the 8th of November, which were forwarded by both routes, with such arrangements as I presumed would ensure their arrival at Natchitoches, by the last day of November, at farthest. My letters by lieutenant S. of the 27th November, (and by express of the 20th ultimo, to the commanding officer at New Orleans,) will have arrived before this time; the President's letter of the 3d instant will also be received before this reaches you, by which you will be informed of the general outlines of the state of things on the western waters, and of some of the deceptions practised by Burr and his creatures, to encourage the recruiting service. There is reason for believing, that he began his operations by stating to a few of his second grade agents, that he had already engaged, not only his principal officers, but a large body of subordinate characters. Your name was on all occasions placed next to Burr's, by himself, and by many of his agents and abettors.

Early in September, the active operations commenced at several points. Comfort Tyler, of the interior of New York, undertook by contract to furnish \$40,000 worth provisions, to be delivered on the upper waters of the Ohio, in November.

A Mr. Blennerhasset, near Marietta, began to operate immediately after Burr had reached Ohio in September. Boats were contracted for on the Muskingum, and at the mouth of Beaver. Kiln dried Indian meal, pork, beef and whiskey were collecting, at various points on the upper waters of the Ohio. Burr descended through the state of Ohio, and passed into Kentucky, and soon after

appeared at Nashville; thence returned to Kentucky, where suspicions had now risen with some force, and produced the farce, of which you have undoubtedly been informed. Those who gave the earliest information, considered the separation of the western states as his primary object, which was to be veiled under the pretext of taking possession of, and settling on, baron Bastrop's lands, on the Ouchita: But as all political parties appeared equally opposed to a separation of the Union; it became necessary to progress a step farther, in the development of the great project; an attack on Mexico and a revolution of that country was intimated; but to be under the direction of the government of the United States, as soon as the proper time arrived for an open declaration, on the part of the executive. Many honest individuals were undoubtedly deceived into a belief, that they were to act under the authority of the government. You were to be first or second in command by land, and Truxton to command by water; honor, glory and riches awaited every individual, who would thus engage in the service of his country. Many honest and respectable men, in different parts of the United States, kept the executive informed, from time to time, of the general movements; and measures of precaution were taken. When your despatches arrived, additional measures were immediately pursued for rendering the enterprize abortive. Captain Stoddard with 130 recruits had been ordered to the arsenal at Newport on the Ohio, and to remain there until further orders. The commanding officers of the several posts on the Ohio and Mississippi, had been ordered to stop and examine all suspicious boats and persons, and when, on examination, there was reason to suspect any improper intentions, to detain the whole and to deliver over the persons to civil authority. Through the months of September, October, and November, a deep silence so far pervaded the western states, that no information was received from any public character; and when the members of Congress arrived from those states they were almost all, without exception, of opinion that the executive had been deceived by groundless suspicions; and that no cause for alarm existed. The executive however possessed such information, as prevented those opinions from producing any relaxation of measures. The boats on the Muskingum were seized by order of the government of Ohio, a day or two before the orders from the President reached them with his proc-

lamation. Tyler and Blennerhasset with 40 or 50 men had rendezvoused at the island on which the latter lived. They received information time enough to make their escape. General Jackson of Nashville, who has been by Burr's emissaries very frequently mentioned, as having engaged in the project with two regiments, is nevertheless confided in, and has orders to secure all boats, provisions or persons which may appear to be destined for the conspiracy.

From a careful consideration and estimate of the numbers which have descended the Ohio, it is confidently believed that they do not exceed three hundred, exclusive of such as may join at or near the mouth of the Cumberland, from the lower part of Kentucky and from Tennessee. And from such accounts as are considered most authentic, it is not believed that the total number will amount to 600 men, unless augmented by the citizens of the Mississippi, and Orleans territories.

Captain Truxton has communicated to the executive very fully, the several conferences Burr had with him; and of his sincerity and integrity there can be no doubt. Eaton has been explicit, and has stated, under his hand, the communications and offers of Burr to him in the course of last winter at this place. Burr assured him that you were to have the immediate command under himself. Eaton was offered a general's commission; Truxton was offered the rank of an admiral.

It is believed the only retreat remaining for Burr, is to transfer his project to the settlement of Bastrop's land. His last effort appears to have been an attempt to induce a belief, that the President's proclamation had been prematurely issued; that it was not to have been sent out, until the expedition had advanced too far to be affected by it.

Although the foregoing representation of the state of things is believed to be correct, and of course that little is to be feared from the force of the conspirators, it is not intended to induce you to be less vigilant, in guarding against all possible events; it may however have a tendency to quiet the citizens, who have been alarmed for the safety of their families and property, and prevent any extensive temporary arrangements for defending the city of New Orleans.

It is rather to be desired, than feared, that the conspirators should so far commit themselves as to leave no possible doubt of their real intentions.

Your despatches by lieutenant Wilson, via. Charleston have been received; and measures taken relative to Bollman and Swartwout. The latter has not yet been heard of, but we expect the vessel hourly.

Our latest accounts, (up to the 1st, of this month) confirm the belief that Burr's force cannot exceed four hundred; and it must be presumed that he cannot be mad enough to make any hostile attempt with such a force, but still I would not advise you to relax your vigilance.

Burr was probably at or near the mouth of the Cumberland, with his whole force, about the last day of December.

Eaton is now here, and making a full discovery of all that passed between him and Burr last winter. Some bolder strokes, than had before been suggested, are now detailed.

By a letter just received from general Jackson, of Nashville, I am informed that colonel Burr left that place on the 22nd ult.; (with hardly men enough to row his boats,) that he met Tyler and Blennerhasset at the mouth of the Cumberland, and that the number of their men was small; what their intentions were was not known.

I am very respectfully, Sir, your obt. servt.

H. DEARBORN.

General James Wilkinson.

It is deemed advisable to annex in the appendix, [Nos. 91, and 92.] two letters addressed by general Wilkinson to governor Claiborne, of October 18th 1806, and March 3d, 1807, expressive of the general's feelings, at the date of them. "*I consider the times eventful, (says Wilkinson) and therefore, must pray of you to be ready for offence as well as defence; you cannot be too alert and vigilant.*" This expression, delivered to governor Claiborne a few days after Swartwout's arrival at Natchitoches, establishes the seasonable caution given by Wilkinson to the governor, and will silence several bold assertions in that respect. We think proper at this stage of our examination, to introduce the plain, unadorned narrative* of colonel Walter Burling, whose patriotism and integrity no

* *Colonel Burling's Deposition.*

At the request of general Wilkinson, I have drawn up the following plain statement of such facts as came within my knowledge relative to his conduct, during the expedition to the Sabine:

breath has ever dared to sully ; whose actions were regulated by no common standard of honor ; whose dignity of character commanded respect from all ; and whose social virtues endeared him to every honorable breast.

Immediately after I was informed of general Wilkinson's arrival at Natchez, in the autumn of 1806, I waited upon him merely to express my regard for a valued acquaintance, and my respect for an officer of rank. I saw him but two or three times. At one interview, he expressed a wish that I should accompany him, or come on with the militia, which were to be ordered to Natchitoches. I did not positively promise him that I would, but I was induced, by circumstances which had no relation to him, to ride as a volunteer in captain Farrar's troop, one of the corps ordered from this territory, to oppose the aggressions of the Spaniards in Louisiana. I think the troop reached Natchitoches on the morning of the 14th or 15th October.

Before we dismounted, I was directed by captain Farrar, who had returned from making his report, to wait upon the general. I accordingly repaired to head quarters, and was received by him with great cordiality ; observing that I was fatigued and indisposed, he proposed that I should repose an hour or two, and that when I should be refreshed, he wished to have some conversation with me, giving me to understand that it would be interesting. I do not recollect, whether it was on the evening of that day or the next morning, that the general communicated to me the information he had obtained, respecting the views of Mr. Burr. After having explained to me the general objects which Mr. Burr proposed to attain, he spoke of what he (Mr. Burr) calculated upon as his means. Among others, was the expected support of general Wilkinson, and through his influence, that of the majority of the force under his command. General Wilkinson observed to me, that Mr. Burr's expedition was pointed against Mexico ; that Mr. Burr had reason to expect important auxiliaries in that country ; and that he had held out great offers to him, such as the second in command, &c.

Without expressing an opinion himself, respecting this scheme of Mr. Burr's, he desired me to give him mine, as to the measures he ought to pursue. Although I should have felt no hesitation in pronouncing at the moment, what I conceived to be his duty, I deemed it proper to wave an immediate reply, and therefore observed to the general, that the question was of such importance, and took me so entirely unprepared, that I must demand until the next morning to give my answer. I accordingly waited on him the next morning, prepared to give my opinion ; but without waiting for it, he told me he had made up his mind as to the steps proper to be taken. That his orders were peremptory, to take possession of the country, between the Arroya Honda and the Sabine, and that although he felt the importance of using the most prompt and efficacious means to save New Orleans from Mr. Burr ; yet he could not take upon himself to dispense with the execution of the pointed orders he had received. He had no hope of receiving fresh instructions from the government in time to oppose Mr. Burr with effect ; he must, therefore, take great responsibility on himself ; but expressed his hope and belief, that the extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed, and the importance of the object, would justify him to the government and the country. His plan was to push on his troops as fast as possible to the Sabine, to fight the Spaniards if they opposed his march ; but, if possible, to effect an honorable accommodation with them, and hasten with all possible expedition to New Orleans, in order to save that city, provided he should be fortunate enough to arrive there before

We leave these dry details, however interesting in historical narrative, to indulge a few reflections on the facts they develop. We find general Wilkinson, in the dawn of the conspiracy, without awaiting the orders of

Mr. Burr. In the mean time, he sent orders to the officer commanding at that place, to put it in the best possible state of defence that his means and the shortness of the time would permit, without explaining to him the cause which rendered this measure necessary. In conformity with this decision, as soon as the means of transportation could be procured, and other necessary arrangements effected, the troops moved from Natchitoches, commanded by the general in person, whom, at his request, I accompanied as an aid-de-camp. It being well ascertained on our march, that the Spanish commander had withdrawn his troops to the right bank of the Sabine, some little difference of opinion arose at head quarters, respecting the necessity of proceeding further. It was stated, that we had as completely taken possession of the country in dispute by one day's march across the Arroya Honda, as we should do by proceeding to the Sabine; more especially as the Spaniards had abandoned the contested ground, and withdrawn themselves to their undisputed limits. It was contended on the other part, that unless we went to the extent of the jurisdiction claimed by us, we did nothing; that the Spaniards had taken possession of the country with a large force, and had only withdrawn for their own convenience, without having, in the smallest degree, acknowledged our claim; but that on the contrary, they still continued to urge their pretensions, and expressed their determination to enforce them; that the moment our troops were withdrawn, they would again take possession and establish such posts as they should deem necessary for keeping it. This was the general's opinion, and we accordingly pressed our march, as fast as the state of the roads and means of transport would permit.

On the twenty-ninth of October, when within about twenty or twenty-five miles of the Sabine, general Wilkinson directed me to repair to the Spanish camp, with a letter to governor Cordero, (whom we understood to be the commanding officer on that frontier) together with a copy to be left with colonel Herrera, the officer who commanded on the Sabine. I was directed to proceed, if I was permitted, to Nacogdoches, and after having delivered my despatches to governor Cordero, to use every argument I could, with propriety suggest, to induce his acquiescence with the general's proposals. On my route to the Sabine, I met a Spanish officer who was the bearer of despatches from the governor general Salcedo to general Wilkinson. I despatched one of the escort which accompanied me to the general for fresh instructions if he had any, in consequence of the communications from governor Salcedo. He rejoined me that night with a letter from the general, directing me to proceed and do the best I could with Cordero, as Salcedo's letter said nothing, which I would perceive by a copy of the translation which he enclosed to me.

I accordingly, next morning, presented myself at the Spanish out-post, and after a little delay, was conducted to the quarters of the second in command. I was shortly after, presented to the commanding officer, colonel Herrera, to whom, after having delivered the copy of the general's letter to Cordero, I communicated his request, that I might be permitted to proceed to Nacogdoches; without entering into any explanation, he immediately assented; ordered an escort to conduct me; and in half an hour I left the Spanish camp for Nacogdoches. While I remained with colonel Herrera, our conversation was altogether on general subjects, and held in the presence of several of his officers, and some of the gentlemen who ac-

his government, (the natural resort of little and timid minds,) stepping decisively into those measures of precaution and preparation, which "*the fidelity of a good citizen and the honor of a soldier*" enjoined on him; he wavers not; his mind is not perturbed; nor are his orders equivo-

panied me. I found they had already constructed barracks sufficient for five or six hundred men, and were busily employed in erecting more. Every thing seemed to indicate their intention of passing the winter in their present camp, and I began to augur unfavorably of the issue of my mission.

I reached Nacogdoches about noon, I think on the 1st November; after dinner, governor Cordero sent for an interpreter to translate the general's letter, and retired with him. I saw him no more until the evening, when he informed me that he would prepare his reply the next morning, and despatch me, as I requested, without delay. He observed that the proposal of the general met his wishes completely; but that he was tied up by the orders he had received from his general, and could not stipulate formally for any conditions, until he received instructions from him, which could not arrive in less than fifteen days. As our object was despatch, I urged all I could think of, to induce him to take the responsibility upon himself; but all in vain; the awe in which he stood of his general, was not to be surmounted; and I saw with pain, that at my return the general would find himself in an unpleasant dilemma. The next morning, after trying once more if any thing could be done with Cordero, and being equally unsuccessful, I took my leave, and the second evening reached the Spanish camp, where I was received with marked politeness by colonel Herrera, who informed me, that had he been acquainted with the contents of the letter, I had left in his hands, he would have saved me the trouble of my ride to Nacogdoches. He said it was too late to write that evening to the general, but that he would send the officer, who was inspector of the troops, and second in command, to visit the general the next morning, upon the subject of his proposal.

I left him, and reached our camp about eight o'clock. The next morning I made a report of the circumstances of my mission to the general.

The following morning, the inspector Viana came to our camp, when the agreement was made, which removed our difficulties for the time; and shortly after, the general leaving the troops under the command of colonel Cushing, set off for Natchitoches, whither I accompanied him. After a short stay at this place, we proceeded to Natchez, where I took my leave of him as a public man, nor have I since that period had any communication with him of a public nature.

I take this occasion to declare, in the most solemn manner, that in all general Wilkinson's transactions, from the time that I entered into his family, until I left him to follow my private pursuits, he appeared to have no other object in view, than the faithful performance of his duty. That I did not perceive in him the smallest doubt or hesitation, respecting the necessity and propriety of endeavoring to defeat Mr. Burr's views by every means in his power; and further that all his negotiations with the Spaniards on the Sabine were pure and honorable, and directed solely to the attainment of his grand object, that of being at liberty so to dispose of his force as would enable him more effectually to counteract the plans of Mr. Burr and his adherents.

W. BURLING.

NATCHEZ, Nov. 9, 1807.

cal; in every instance of his conduct he is collected, calm, prompt, decisive, and intrepid in the maintenance of the rights and independence of the United States. When the orders of government reached him, they served only to sanction the resolutions he had previously adopted; but the coincidence, between his conduct and his instructions, is as precise as if he had acted under the most explicit orders. Can any man, who is not biased by personal or political animosity, believe that general Wilkinson could have been a coadjuter of colonel Burr, when he was actively exerting himself to defend the integrity of the very government, which the colonel intended to destroy?

The President of the United States represents, in his message to Congress, that Burr set out with two objects, viz: to sever the Western states from the eastern, and to organize, within the jurisdiction of the Union, an expedition against the Mexican provinces; these were contemporaneous in their origin, and coincident in their execution to a certain point, at which they were separable upon his volition; and the whole means were so adapted and organized as to become applicable to either project, without loss, inconvenience or embarrassment. Now, if Wilkinson had been associated with Burr, it was impossible he could have been placed in a situation, more eligible for the promotion of his plans; for if he ever possessed the power to betray his trust, to the injury of his country, it was when opposed to the Spaniards in front of Natchitoches; then, indeed, by the prompt and rigorous execution of his orders, he could have "let slip the dogs of war;" have acquired the plaudits of the states and territories west of the Appalachians; and would have stood justified to the government for an act, which would have consummated the treason of Burr, realized the views

*Mississippi Territory, }
Adams County, ss. }*

BEFORE me, Jonathan Davis, one of the justices assigned to keep the peace, in and for the county aforesaid, came, and personally appeared, Walter Burling, esquire, whose signature is above affixed, and being sworn according to law, on his solemn oath, deposeth and saith, that the foregoing statement contains the facts, to the best of his recollection, and further saith not.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this 10th day of December, 1807.

[SEAL.]

JONA: DAVIS.

of his followers, and gratified the wishes of those crooked politicians, who would be content with any change of government to effect a change of men, and who now curse Wilkinson for the prevention of these changes. But what was this devoted man's conduct? He suspends the execution of his orders, courts peace, and preserves it; yet asserts the pretensions of his government beyond the tenor of his orders, [*See the letter from the secretary of war November 8th, 1806, Appendix, No. 93.*] and, turning about, throws himself into the gap of peril; baffles the conspirators, and again *serves and saves his country* from harm; preferring to expose himself to the denunciations of his deluded fellow citizens, in the Western states and territories, to sacrifice the attachments of those, who had been his earliest and warmest friends, and draw down upon himself the hatred and the vengeance of thousands, sooner than forego his duty, forfeit his honor, and abandon his country; and now, this is the man who must be crushed, to satiate the vindictive spirit of a personal enemy, and satisfy the vengeance of the very traitors whose projects he frustrated; and this, too, under the affected apprehensions and pretended fears, that he *may* betray those very interests, which he has defended and protected at every hazard, and every expense of feeling, fortune and character, when they were exposed to dangers, now far removed, and which, from the extinction of the pretended Spanish influence in that quarter, can never recur.

CHAPTER IV.

WE have now arrived at that part of our subject, which requires a brief consideration of a very important point of political doctrine in relation to republican governments. The jealous freedom of our constitution has confided very little to executive discretion. The power of every public officer is confined to the strict letter of the law. The maxims of implication are denounced, and specific ordinations for every particular object, are rigidly insisted upon by the legislative body. This circumscription of official agency must frequently leave an individual, who occupies a responsible situation, in a perplexing dilemma, when to act is to overleap the fixed boundaries of

duty, and not to act, is to put at risk the best interests of the country. In such a case, what is an officer to do? Shall he, by a scrupulous adherence to a rule of conduct prescribed to him for common occasions, look quietly on and see the nation undone, before he moves? That is, to speak directly to the subject before us, is he to wait until a band of conspirators, led on by a daring traitor, have collected their forces, till they have actually raised the standard of rebellion, and at the point of the bayonet, are ready to enforce their lawless designs? or, summoning all his fortitude to his aid, and devoting himself to the safety of the nation, shall he boldly step forward, oppose himself to their progress, arrest the most conspicuous accessories, disconcert the principal and disperse his associates; and then, throwing himself on the virtue and intelligence of his countrymen, venture the consequences of a temporary violation of the laws, with respect to a few individuals, in order to effect the salvation of the government, and secure the lives and property of the mass of the population? In such a case, general Wilkinson could not hesitate for the alternative. To have paused under such circumstances, would have been to incur, in good earnest, the charge of "misprision of treason." But, discarding all personal considerations, he opposed himself to an active and formidable band of desperados, rendered more imposing by their intelligence, their pecuniary means and the former respectability of their chief. General Wilkinson was certain he should provoke the enmity of the leading traitor, and his numerous and powerful confederates, extended over the whole Union and its territories, and he had no assurance of the approbation of his country. The dissipation of the danger in the first stages of it, before it had made head, was sufficient to render doubtful the magnitude of it, and there could be no question that the conspirators and their friends, baffled in their attempts, would leave no means untried to blast the author of their discomfiture. To divert the public attention from their own guilt, it was necessary to criminate Wilkinson, and by way of foundation, a report was busily propagated that he had violated the laws, under the pretence of dangers which no where existed: But, amidst all these discouraging circumstances, (and no man could be more sensible of the hazards he run,) Wilkinson resolved to strike for his country; he persevered, and triumphed: and for his reward he enjoys calumnies, prosecutions and persecutions.

If in the display of an energy beyond the law, he transcended the delegated authority in virtue of which he acted. Let it be remembered that his situation was such (under the pressure of the most alarming rumours) as to impel him to act, without having an opportunity to form a correct judgment. In this instance, Wilkinson will take proofs, from the lips of a gentleman known to be his enemy, to evince the delicacy of his situation and the difficulties and embarrassments by which he was encompassed. On the 10th of January, 1807, the honorable Mr. Randolph, from one of those floods of eloquence, with which he so frequently excites and alarms his audience, sent off a streamlet in quest of Aaron Burr, from which the following extract is taken :

Extract from Mr. John Randolph's Speech, 10th January, 1807.

"A spectator, not in the habit of reading our public prints, or conversing with individuals out of doors, but who should draw his ideas of the situation of the country from the proceedings of this house, during the present session, would be led to infer that there never existed, in any nation, a greater degree of peace, tranquillity or union, at home or abroad, than in the United States, at this time. And yet, what is the fact? That the United States are not only threatened with external war, but with conspiracies and treasons; *the more alarming from their not being defined.* And yet we sit and adjourn, adjourn and sit; take things as school boys, do as we are bid, and ask no questions.

"Is there a man in this house, who at this time doubts that if the government, I mean the executive and legislative, had taken a manly and decisive attitude towards Spain, and instead of pen, ink and paper, had given men and arms;—Is there a man who believes that not only Spain, would have been overawed, but that those domestic traitors would also have been intimidated and overawed, whose plans threatened to be so dangerous?

"I again invite the house to draw a proper inference from the indecent, insulting, outrageous demeanor of the minister of Spain. I did understand that he was to have been deported, shipped off: On the contrary, I find him here still; and is not the inference from my friend from Pennsylvania irresistible; that considering the crowd of memorials presented by him to the government, in the

case of Miranda, and that no remonstrance has been made against this pretended expedition against Mexico, that he is acquainted with it; that he knows *it is ostensibly for Mexico, but really for Orleans, for the severance of the Union.*

"Some gentlemen make extremely light of this conspiracy. *I cannot however conceive, how a man, in a state of ignorance, respecting its nature or extent, can make light of it. The very circumstance of not knowing the extent of danger, has a tendency to magnify it beyond its natural size.* But there is one fact that has come so direct, that it cannot be doubted. *I believe it will altogether depend upon the circumstance of the conspirators getting to Baton Rouge before the troops of the United States arrive there, whether New Orleans shall fall; and the waters of the Red river are so low, that we cannot decide, when our troops will arrive; they will get possession of the ordnance, and nothing can prevent the reduction of Orleans, but a pitched battle.*

"Perhaps at this moment, while I am addressing you, at least for a time, the fate of the Western country may be decided.

"I do not conceive it to be a thing of yesterday, but an affair of long standing. Look back to the times, when the character implicated in this conspiracy first began to move in that country. It was at least cotemporaneous with the disappointment of his ambition.

"But I cannot draw so favorable an inference of the public sentiment in any country, when I see *a most extraordinary and ramified combination, composed of the most leading characters, and the most flaming patriots too, for the express purpose of severing the Union.*"

If, then, a man of Mr. Randolph's sleepless vigilance, acute discernment, and vast sagacity, who as *the Cerberus of the treasury, and the political argus of the nation, has become the depository of secret informations from the extremities of the Union*; when posted at the seat of government, the very fountain of intelligence, could consider the state of things on the Western waters so desperately alarming; if he, at such a position, could regard the conspiracy as ramifying and extending itself to every quarter, and sucking into its horrible vortex, *"the most leading characters and the most flaming patriots too, for the express purpose of severing the Union;"* what must have been the ideas of general Wilkinson on the subject, at the very spot to be

assailed? Harrassed with unceasing reports of the approach of the traitors, in vast force and formidable array; and beholding the associates of the conspiracy, stalking the streets of New Orleans, and preaching sedition and rebellion in broad day light. [*See appendix, No. 94 to 114, inclusive.*] Could he have decided otherwise than in favor of immediate action? Were not promptitude, decision and vigor necessary to the safety of the Union? In truth, Mr. Jefferson has very happily described Wilkinson's situation at New Orleans; and to judge correctly of his conduct, it is essential to a sound opinion, that his judges should *place themselves in his situation, and only with his information.* The facts within Mr. Randolph's knowledge, were indeed "too direct to be doubted," and the deductions which he drew from them, were strictly correct. Baton Rouge was indeed Burr's first object. Sensible of this, Wilkinson descended the Red river, and while he prepared for a pitched battle at Orleans, (*which would have been taken by Burr's associates, but for the general's presence there,*) he occupied the river above Baton Rouge, with the armed vessels, and prevented Burr's descent by water, to that place; and his force being too feeble to hazard a march across the Mississippi territory, his followers deserted him; his schemes were blown up, and then he opened those batteries against Wilkinson, which have not ceased to play upon him to the present hour.

It is beyond doubt, that, in a free country under a republican government, unforeseen events may produce extreme cases, wherein the tardy progress of legislative interference will oblige those in executive trust to exert extraordinary powers for the safety of the commonwealth; and we may refer to the history of Virginia for an example. The Romans, in great exigencies, elected dictators with absolute powers. This, in the sequel, became an evil, for every dictator did not turn out a Cincinnatus. It seems much the safest course *to leave the point open*, and to commit the destinies of the nation, in an imminent crisis, to the virtuous resolution of those, who may be intrepid enough to volunteer, in behalf of their government and country; to rally the good sense of the people, to an absolution of a partial violation of the laws, and to uphold the active supporter of the public interests against the vehement attacks of the miscreants and their partizans whom he had defeated. There is, in fact, something ridiculous in condemning a man for the infraction of a law,

relative to the liberty and safety of half a dozen individuals, of more than suspicious character, when by the very infraction the liberty and safety of the whole society is preserved.

But what shall we say to the *example* of persecuting a man, who has defeated the machinations of a legion of traitors? Above all, what shall we say to that *example* of persecution, when it is notoriously instigated or carried on, by the discomfited associates, their public protectors and secret friends; and that in the height of this persecution, a representative of the very people who were thus saved from a civil war of doubtful issue, should wink at gross and illiberal artifices, calculated to destroy the man whose only crime has been the want of a selfish circumspection in his own behalf, and a total disregard of consequences, as they might affect his personal safety and fame, and the prosperity of his future fortunes.

What a lesson will it be to future commanders, in times perhaps more trying, when the lure of ambition and wealth shall tempt them on one hand, and duty dissuade them on the other. Will they not calculate the *risk* of trusting for indemnity to prejudiced judges, or to the cold blooded calculations of party politicians? Will they not cast a fearful eye upon the path of duty, and say, "on this road Wilkinson travelled, and, although faithful to his country, he has been suffered ignobly to fall. The traitors whom we may overthrow, will be dispersed, but not annihilated; they will assail us in ten thousand different shapes; they will hunt us from the cradle, to the tomb; a life of public services will be ransacked for incidents; suspicions will be perverted into facts, and the merest indiscretions, converted into crimes; the press will teem with anonymous libels; politicians fearful of their popularity, will keep aloof; the envious, the jealous and the hostile, of every description, will contribute to the common stock of malevolence; those who are truly well disposed, will become shy; the world, deserting us in the midst of these oppressions, will hoot as we descend in the scale of opinion, and *every ass* will think himself at liberty to exhibit his heels."

Then turning to the path where treason invites to golden treasures, to high command and glorious triumphs, to royal diadems and imperial sway, "along this road" they will say "there is danger and there may be ruin, but the adventurers are of the best blood of the country; they

are courageous *and at least* will not abandon us, the bonds of vice are stronger than those of virtue, and the chances are at all events in our favor; as therefore condemnation and disgrace is probable if we do our duty, and as these are the heaviest evils which can befall us in a traitorous enterprize, let us pursue the path of daring treason and let the curses of our country follow us; of what importance are the curses of a people, who have no blessings, no benefits for their preservers." Such is the lesson to be taught by the persecutions of Wilkinson. Is there danger in it to the future destiny of the Union?

Mr. Jefferson in his letter to Wilkinson of the 3d February, 1807, draws the line within which a man in Wilkinson's situation may safely act, without authority against a band of traitors: "*your sending here (to Washington) Swartwout and Bollman, and adding to them Burr, Blannerhasset and Tyler, should they fall into your hands, will be supported by the public opinion.*" But (continues Mr. Jefferson) "*I hope you will not extend this deportation to persons against whom there is only suspicions or shades of offence not strongly marked; in that case I fear the public sentiment would desert you; because seeing no danger here, violations of law are felt with strength.*" We find accordingly that Wilkinson had not extended his deportations beyond this line, the suspicions and shades of offence against every man deported from the Orleans territory, were not only "*strongly marked,*" but they were thus marked by the solemn oaths of respectable men; sufficient evidence of this would be affixed to this volume, were it not extraneous to the immediate question before us, which is, whether general Wilkinson was concerned with colonel Burr in the conspiracy.

What then ought to have been done by the government of the United States in relation to Wilkinson? Certainly a general act of indemnity and protection, ought to have been passed in his favour! This is the constant practice of the British parliament, in relation to such ministers as do any thing contrary to municipal law, in order to subserve the great and fundamental interests of the empire. If the whole American people could have been at New Orleans; if they could have been eye witnesses to the behaviour of the traitorous associates; if they could have seen how general Wilkinson was hemmed in by them, then they would have felt the necessity of displaying the energy which he exhibited; but as Mr. Jefferson re-

marks "seeing no danger *here*" (at Washington or elsewhere) "violations of law were felt with strength." This is the critical point for Wilkinson ! Men at a distance from the scene of treason, perceiving no danger to themselves, and reposing in perfect quiet, free from alarm, viewed the seizure and deportation of individuals as a heinous act of injustice ; the sober and comfortable citizen unmoved by the spirit of adventure ; unaccustomed to reflect on the desperation of men embarked in an unlawful warlike expedition, was easily brought to look with horror on the violation of personal liberty. Knaves have known how to work this spirit to advantage, and they have, with an unholy zeal, invoked against Wilkinson the maledictions of his countrymen ; whether they will succeed so far as absolutely to crush him, is an affair of less importance to the general, than that they should not ruin his reputation with posterity ; they may destroy his military fortunes, but they cannot despoil him of his honor, and when the grave has received him, justice will be done to his memory.

Let us for a moment calmly reflect upon the question, *whether circumstances do not sometimes occur, which make it a duty in officers of high trust to assume authorities beyond the law?* It is easy enough of solution in principle, but must be sometimes embarrassing in practice. A strict observance of the written laws is doubtless *one* of the first duties of a good citizen, but it is not *the highest*. The laws of necessity, of self preservation, of saving our country when in danger, are of higher obligation. To lose our country by a scrupulous adherence to written law would be to lose the law itself, with life, liberty, property and all those, who are enjoying them with us, thus absurdly sacrificing the end to the means. When in the battle of Germantown, general Washington's army was annoyed from Chew's house, he did not hesitate to plant his cannon against it, although the property of a good citizen. When he besieged Yorktown, he levelled the suburbs, feeling that the laws of property must yield to the safety of the nation. While that army was before York, the governor of Virginia took horses, carriages, provisions, and even men by force, to enable that army to continue embodied, till it could master the public enemy, and he was justified. So in retreats, we destroy roads, and boats, and bridges, and houses, force the inhabitants from their homes, and despoil the country of its stock. A ship at sea, in distress for provisions, meets another having abundance, yet refu-

sing a supply the law of self-preservation authorizes the distressed to take a supply by force. In conflagrations, buildings are demolished to arrest the progress of the flames. In all these cases the unwritten laws of necessity, of self preservation, and of the public safety, control the written laws of *meum and tuum*.

After the affair of the Chesapeake, the nation considered war a very probable result: The unexpected outrage found our magazines unprovided in many essentials, for immediate defence, and no appropriation existed for their purchase. The executive was reduced to the alternative of anticipating the law, or exposing the country. He acted, and the necessary provisions were made. This might be called an usurpation, but the pressure of the occasion justified it to the government, and the measure was sanctioned by law.

But to trace this question further, and to silence cavil, we shall quote an authority, *of which we shall have occasion to make much and frequent use in these memoirs*. In the debate on the Georgia claims, the honorable Mr. John Randolph expressed himself in the following luminous manner: "*It is from great first principles* (to which the patriots of Georgia so gloriously appealed) *that we must look for aid in such extremities. Yes, extraordinary cases, such as this, call for extreme remedies. They bid defiance to palliatives, and it is only from the knife and actual cautery that you can expect relief. There is no cure short of extirpation. Attorneys and judges do not decide the fate of empires.*" Can any thing be more precisely in point? Without indulging Mr. Randolph's sanguinary disposition, Wilkinson was inspired by his judgment, and acted under the sanction of his opinions, as a statesman and a legislator.

To proceed to the conspiracy of Burr, and particularly to general Wilkinson's situation in New Orleans. In judging the case, we are bound to consider the state of the information, correct and incorrect, which he then possessed. He expected Burr and his band from above, a British fleet from below, and he knew there was a formidable conspiracy within the city. [*See appendix, 94 to 114.*]

Under these circumstances was he justifiable? 1st. In seizing notorious conspirators? On this there can be but two opinions, one entertained by the guilty and their accomplices, the other by all honest men. 2d. In sending

them to the seat of government, when the written law gave them a right to trial in the territory? The danger of their correspondence with Burr; the certainty of their continuing their machinations; the tardiness and weakness of the law; apathy of the judges, who insisted that the traitors could not be imprisoned while they could find security; active patronage of the whole tribe of lawyers, with two or three exceptions; unknown disposition of the juries; an hourly expectation of the enemy; salvation of the city, and of the Union itself, which would have been convulsed to its center, had that conspiracy succeeded. These considerations constituted a law of necessity and of self-preservation, and rendered the *salus populi* supreme over the written law. Wilkinson was reduced to the necessity of putting down the conspirators, or of being himself put down. The officer who is called to act on this exalted ground, does indeed risk himself on the justice of the controlling powers of the constitution, and his station makes it his duty to incur that risk. But these controlling powers and his fellow citizens generally, are bound to judge according to the circumstances under which he acted. They are not to transfer the information of this place or moment, to the time and place of his actions, but must put themselves in his situation. It was known at Washington, that there never was danger of a British fleet from below, and that Burr's band was crushed before it reached the Mississippi. But general Wilkinson's information was very different, and he could act on no other.

In offering these principles and illustrations to our readers, we pretend not to invade the general rule, but to contend for the exception only; our doctrines apply to extreme cases and not to ordinary occasions, in which the written law may take its undisturbed course with safety to the community. In such instances, the example of over-leaping the law is of greater evil than a strict adherence to its imperfect provisions. It is incumbent on those only who accept of great charges, to risk themselves on great occasions, when the safety of the nation, or some of its very high interests, are at stake. An officer is bound to obey his orders, yet he would be a very bad one who should do so in cases, when, from a change of circumstances, the execution would produce mischievous consequences. The line of discrimination may be difficult, but the good officer is bound to draw it at his own peril, and must depend for

justification on the soundness of his judgment, the rectitude of his motives, and the justice of his country.*

But why need Wilkinson discuss the question at all? with respect to him, it is decided in his favor. "*We were pleased to see,*" (says President Jefferson,) "*that without waiting for our orders, you adopted nearly the same plan yourself, and acted on it with promptitude.*" This was on the 3d of February, 1807; and in the same letter, Mr. Jefferson says, "*We do approve of the defensive operations for New Orleans.*" This is explicit; it is an honorable disinterested proof of the correctness of the general's proceedings, and will live after the motley tribe of his enemies, their names, their vices and vindictive pursuits are consigned to oblivion.

Having vindicated general Wilkinson *directly*, we shall now proceed to corroborate that vindication *indirectly*, by demonstrating the feebleness and fallacy, of what Mr. Clark considers proofs of Wilkinson's guilt. These proofs which are numerically arranged, will be examined and refuted in due order. The following is the proper classification of them.

1. The closest intimacy for a series of years.
2. A confidential correspondence kept up in cypher.
3. Visits paid at the distance of many thousand miles.
4. That the intercourse was broken off between Burr and Wilkinson, precisely at the period when it was demonstrated that the scheme must fail.
5. Concealment of Burr's letters to Wilkinson, which the latter refused to expose, on the trial at Richmond, without Burr's consent.
6. Wilkinson's letter to Clark by Burr.
7. Wilkinson's letter to Adair dated Rapids of Ohio, May 28th, 1805, 11 o'clock, and which contained these expressions: "I was to have introduced my friend Burr to you, but in this I failed by accident. He understands your merits, and reckons on you. Prepare to meet me and I will tell you *all*. We must have a *peep* at the unknown world beyond me."

* Wilkinson will regret, to the last moment of his life, that he did not disobey the imperious order, for the movement of the troops from his camp, at Terre au Bœuf, to Natchez; because, although it might have sealed his own ruin, it would have saved the lives of five hundred of those citizens, who were intrusted to his command; but his natural independence and decision had been impaired by the deluge of calumnies which poured in upon him from all quarters, and his resolution, in this instance, failed him. Testimonies irretrageable will be offered in the fourth volume of these memoirs, to sustain this fact: yet it is Wilkinson's purpose to defend himself only, and not to attach blame elsewhere.

8. Bruff's evidence.

9. The letter postmarked 13th May, and Burr's cyphered letter.

As a brief preliminary to an examination of the force of this circumstantial evidence, it is necessary to remark, that *the proofs of Wilkinson's guilt are facts, and letters which he himself has made public*, and that this circumstance alone affords a fair presumption of innocence. He exposed them *voluntarily*, which adds to the force of the presumption.

The *first* in the series of testimony, to wit: Wilkinson's close intimacy with Burr for a series of years, has been answered already. That intimacy originated during the American revolution; it grew in the contact of official situations under the federal government; and it was continued after Burr's exclusion from office, from sympathy for an old friend; a desire to restore him to his former political standing; and to render him serviceable to his country.

The *second*, relating to a confidential correspondence kept up in cypher. It has been shewn that this was designed, on the part of Wilkinson, merely to prevent the prying eye of impertinent curiosity, with respect to familiar conversation, when the parties were at a considerable distance; and that it existed at a time, when Burr's views to legitimate power forbid the slightest notion of the severance of the Union.

The *third*, as to *visits* paid at a distance, is unsupported by a shadow of truth. Doctor and Mrs. Brown, the sister and brother in law of colonel Burr, with a charming niece and half a dozen fine boys, had, on his recommendation, removed to the territory of Louisiana, from the city of New York. [*See appendix, No. 5.*] He felt, or professed to feel, himself somewhat responsible, for the fortunes which might attend their migration; and the ostensible object of his visit to St. Louis in September, 1805, was to see those relatives. Subsequent occurrences have proved that he had other views, which he glanced at, but did not unfold to Wilkinson, who, penetrating the impatience and disgusts of his mind, endeavoured to sooth them, by promoting his election to Congress from the Indiana territory. Burr never paid Wilkinson a distant visit in his whole life, nor did Wilkinson ever seek Burr at the distance of a league.

The *fourth*, respecting the period when the intercourse

between Burr and Wilkinson was broken off, completely fails. Wilkinson, at the period he received the last letter in cypher from Burr, was at Natchitoches. This celebrated letter, so far from even hinting at a failure, held out the most sanguine assurances of success; arms, men and money had been all secured by Burr, and his ingenious pupil, Mr. Swartwout,* magnified his numbers and resources tenfold, embracing the southern, middle and western states, and comprehending all classes and ranks of society. Wilkinson was at too great a distance from Burr to ascertain the truth of his statement, and if he had any confidence in Burr at all, (which would have been the case, if he had been associated with the traitor,) he must have given credit to his report, and believed the success of the scheme infallible; yet Wilkinson apprized colonel Cushing of the conspiracy, and exposed the name of Burr as being at the head of it: So far, then, from Wilkinson's breaking off the correspondence, when he thought the scheme would fail, he broke it off precisely at that point of time, when every thing induced him to think it would succeed, and when, in fact, he considered the event inevitable.

The state of general Wilkinson's mind, on the 7th of November, the day he left Natchitoches for Natchez, cannot be so justly pourtrayed, as by reference to the subjoined letters* of the same date, to colonel Cushing and Lieutenant colonel Freeman: He had received the day

* Yet this conspirator escaped the notice of those gentlemen, who on the grand Jury at Richmond, labored to indict Wilkinson, as has been said, for concealing information from the President, which he had furnished him by letter, *six months before*. The spirit which dictated that cruel attempt, has since pursued Wilkinson with unrelenting fury; and but for a Cabell and the mass of honor and justice, which went with him on the occasion, the vengeance of Wilkinson's enemies might have been satiated at that period.

* Copy. *General Wilkinson to Colonel Cushing Natchitoches Nov. 7th 1806.*

MY DEAR SIR,

By letters found here I perceive the plot thickens; yet all but those concerned, sleep profoundly. My God! what a situation has our country reached. Let us save it if we can. You must instruct Strong by my authority, and therefore leaving the minutiae to you, I will barely suggest the propriety of calling his incessant attention to the repair and preservation of the arms, ammunition and ordnance deposited with him; and also to every appurtenant of the quarter-master's department. He must keep a strict eye to the conduct of the Spaniards, on the side of Texas, and is to advise me by express, at New Orleans, of every casualty which may occur or any change which may be made by them.

I have nothing more to add, but to intreat you to accelerate your movement by every practicable means.

before, on his return from the Sabine, the information of James L. Donaldson, esquire, [*No. 71.*] derived from Mr. Michael Myers, a most respectable merchant of Montreal, who had descended the Mississippi directly from St. Louis, : He could not doubt the report : He was shocked at what he thought the supineness of government, and although he believed every thing lost, he determined to discharge his duty at every peril. Come then, said he, to his faithful second Cushing. "hurry, hurry after me, and if necessary, let us be buried together in the ruins of the place we shall defend."

The *fifth*, namely the *concealment* of Burr's letters, which Wilkinson refused to expose without Burr's permission, is of as little avail to Mr. Clark, whose fine spun

I think the officers, who have families at Fort Adams, should be advised to leave them there, for if I mistake not we shall have an insurrection of blacks as well as whites to combat.

It is this moment reported you will not be able to get your boats over a shoal of several miles, just above Black river. I pray you to scrutinize the subject and to surmount the difficulty without a pause. You have an admirable resort by marching your main body through the apaloussa, should the river be found actually impracticable.

You must leave Strong a suit of clothes for his company, from those brought up, by exchange. No consideration, my friend, of family or personal inconvenience must detain the troops a moment longer than can be avoided, either by land or by water ; they must come, and rapidly. On the 15th of this month Burr's declaration is to be made in Tennessee and Kentucky ; hurry, hurry after me, and if necessary, let us be buried together in the ruins of the place we shall defend.

COL. T. H. CUSHING,

Copy. Gen. Wilkinson to Lt. Col. Freeman, Natchitoches, Nov. 7th, 1806.

SIR,

This will be delivered to you by major Porter, who descends with a body of artificers and laboratory men to aid your operations. The major carries with him specific instructions which you are to respect and support promptly. We must repair the old defences of the city ; it is our only resort, as we shall not have time to do more. Look to this object and make the necessary prompt exertions ; we shall want I expect ten thousand pickets for palisades, fraisings, &c. Contract for them, or as many of them as you can on the best terms, deliverable as speedily as possible, but at all events before January. Plank and scantling also will be wanted for platforms, sleepers, braces, &c. Let your measures be taken as if by order from the secretary of war ; but profess utter ignorance of motives. Manifest no hurry or emotion, for you are surrounded by secret agents, yet use every exertion in your power. Quarters for the troops from this place, (excepting Strong's co.) those at Fort Adams, and point Coupee, and one hundred from Fort Stoddert, must be provided and prepared. Contracts will be made for wood as we descend the river.

I shall be with you by the 20th instant, in the mean time be you as silent as the grave.

With great consideration and respect, I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
LIEUT. COL. C. FREEMAN.

arguments vanish before the appearance of the letters themselves. Mr. Clark seems to think the disclosure of a private correspondence a trifle, and judges perhaps that other men ought to act with the same profligacy which marks his own conduct. Men of honor do not think so; Wilkinson did not think so; he refused to disclose them except in the last extremity, unless Burr would assent to it; Burr would not assent, and the extremity has arrived. Wilkinson is as good as his word.

The *sixth*, is Wilkinson's letter to Clark by Burr. This also has been explained in a manner to prove that Mr. Clark was badly advised in making the charge. The phrase, "things improper to letter," furnishes Mr. Clark with a wide scope for the exercise of his imagination; and it is remarkable, that he always seems most delighted with his subject, when he can lay hold of dubious expressions; he then appears to be in his native element, for his fancy delights to roam in the regions of conjecture and darkness. So much for his "virtuous education." "Proofs," page 4.

The *seventh*, is Wilkinson's letter to Adair from the rapids of Ohio. It is to be remarked, that Adair was an *elevé* of Wilkinson; that the latter had dragged him from obscurity and had taken him as a lieutenant on an expedition against the Wabash Indians, in the year 1791; he had recommended him also to generals St. Clair and Wayne (see memoirs) to the secretaries of war, Mc Henry and Dearborn, and had appointed him under the authority of general Washington to a military command; [See appendix, No. 116, 117, and 118.] but Burr had asked from Wilkinson a letter to Adair, expressly to aid his election in Tennessee, (where Adair was well acquainted with certain influential men); Wilkinson had failed to furnish the letter requested, and this letter, said to be written from the rapids of Ohio, was to prepare Adair for the promotion of Burr's views, in relation to his election to Congress; at the same time hinting at the probability of a Spanish war, a subject on which Wilkinson and Adair had frequently conversed, and which, from the existing state of things at that particular period, seemed unavoidable. This letter, evidently written in haste, [See appendix, No. 119.] to a person in whom the general entirely confided, with relation to Burr contains the expression "he *reckons* on you;" that is he reckons on you, to assist him in his election to Congress. With

respect to a Spanish war, it says, "prepare to visit me and I will tell you *all*;" that is, all about the views of a Spanish war; and, *in that case*, Wilkinson adds, "we must have a peep at the unknown world beyond me." This was quite natural. for, in case of a war with Spain, the United States would, of course, have aimed a blow at the Spanish possessions in their neighborhood; because there she was the most vulnerable; and if that blow had been aimed, the militia of Kentucky would necessarily have been called into service, and with them, it was consistent that Wilkinson should desire the co-operation of Adair, his quondam aid-de-camp, who had served under his orders and whose military character he understood.

But Wilkinson does not rest his defence against this charge, upon the preceding candid explanations; fortunately in this, as in other instances, he has preserved the letters of Adair himself, to speak for his own guilt and Wilkinson's innocence. We refer to the subjoined extracts from * Adair's letters and of an intercepted letter, Nos. 121, 122, 123 and 124.

* *Extracts taken from three letters of general John Adair, Senator of the United States from Kentucky, to general James Wilkinson at St Louis.*

CITY OF WASHINGTON, December 31, 1805.

I HAVE a favor to beg of you, which, I am afraid, you will think too great. I ask for my own information alone. I wish to know your opinion of the courses and distances that follow. First How far the Rio Bravo empties into the Gulph, from the mouth of the Mississippi and New Orleans, together with the general course. The same as to the river Colorado, and the probable length of these rivers; likewise the same as to a line which would begin on the Gulph, between Carecut or Carcase and Armento or Marmento, and run so as to pass between the Adeas and Natchitoches, until it strikes the Red river. I do not expect you to send me any thing like a map of the country, but merely such information as will enable me to form something like a correct opinion, for my own information and satisfaction. I well know your geographical knowledge of that country must be better than any others. Will you likewise mention the distance and course from the mouth of the Ohio to Santa Fee?

CITY OF WASHINGTON, January 27, 1806.

YOU observe to me, that I "have seen colonel Burr, and ask me what was his business in the west?" *Answer.* Only to avoid a prosecution in New York. Now, sir, you will oblige me by answering a question in turn, for I know you can. Pray, how far is it, and what kind of way from St. Louis to Santa Fee, and from thence to Mexico?

I was informed a few days past, and I believe the information to be correct, that both the ruling parties in New York have made proposals to colonel Burr, offering to pass a law pardoning all past, and to elect him governor, if he will return. He left this a few days past for the south, and will return before the session closes; whether he will accede to their proposals or not, I am unable to say.

The testimony of general Adair will not be rejected by the enemies of Wilkinson or of the country, much less by his friend and patron Mr. Clark; and these letters not only acquit Wilkinson of criminal intentions, in his letter to Adair, from the Rapids of Ohio, May 28th, 1805, but they also vindicate him against the suspicion of any sinister connexion with Burr, at the same time that they evince a perfect understanding between Burr and Adair.

The *eighth*, is the testimony of major Bruff. If any thing could add to the ridiculous absurdity and deliberate villany of the major's tale, it would be the manifest malice with which he detailed particulars; and yet what does it amount to? Simply, that general Wilkinson said he had in view "*a grand scheme*;" and is there an unbiased individual in existence, who seriously believes that general Wilkinson would closet himself with a man, and lock the

CITY OF WASHINGTON, *April 17, 1806.*

CONGRESS have agreed to a resolution to adjourn on Monday next; all the important concerns of the nation, the insults and injuries it has sustained, (as communicated by the President, and clamoured from one end of the continent to the other,) have been duly attended and provided for, so have said a large majority; I was not one of that majority, therefore I was wrong. Two millions of dollars have been appropriated to enable the President to negotiate with foreign powers; by paying this in advance, it is hoped we can purchase the Floridas and settle all differences with Spain. This, the intemperate Mr. Randolph calls buying peace, not from Spain, but from her master Bonaparte. Some others think so too; they must be mistaken. A bill to prevent the importation of certain articles from Great Britain, after the 15th of November next, it is believed, will bring that haughty maritime power to bend her top-sails to us. Thus our wars have all vanished. You may content yourself with governing. You will have no fighting (unless with judge Lucas.) A bill came to the Senate some time past, declaring that no officer of the army or navy should hold or exercise any civil office or appointment, after the 3d of July next. This, I presume, was intended to give you a relish for entering upon a celebration of the 4th. The Senate rejected it. Another has been sent us a few days past, authorising the judges of the Michigan and Louisiana territories, to make laws with or without the aid of the governor. This bill was taken up in Senate yesterday, and drew, from your friends, some warmth of expression; they considered it as an unwarranted persecution, founded in malice. I was sorry general Samuel Smith was in the chair, as President pro tempore. He comes out pretty freely on such occasions. The bill was laid to sleep, till the first Monday in November next; till which period, I presume, the governor may likewise sleep in peace, as it is now too late in the session, for malice itself, to meditate a further attack.

You have seen in the papers, the attack made by Mr. Randolph on the administration. It is spoken of here as a light thing. My own opinion is, that it will grow. An opposition to those in power is generally popular; those who oppose have only to watch the conduct of others; they do not act themselves, by which they might be committed. The President has been imprudent, in declaring so soon, that he would not be a candidate for the office. It has lost him a great share of influence, derived from patronage. Courtiers already look up to the President in expectancy.

door upon him, merely to tell him that he had in his head "a grand scheme?" A grand scheme of what? Major Bruff, poor gentleman, could not discover, with all his ingenious watchfulness; but his head being filled with "gorgons and chimeras dire," and his heart with vengeful malignity, he concluded that this "grand scheme" must be for the subversion of the Union, and the ruin of the poor Spaniards in Mexico. This expression, "a grand scheme," being a little mysterious, being invented by Bruff, precisely for the purpose to which Mr. Clark has applied it, gives the latter another opportunity of indulging his *poetical talent*, which is always excited by fiction. The latter part of the general's letters to Adair and Bruff, [*See Nos. 119 and 120,*] treat about Wilkinson's private concerns, and of his wish to retire to private life, and so far they palpably refute every idea of any connexion of an improper kind with Burr; for it is not reasonable to suppose, a man bent on an immense and daring enterprise, in which he must *lose all or gain all*, would give himself, at the same time, concern about his domestic arrangements or debts, in a country, which he was about to revolutionize or quit forever.

To those who may desire to understand the merits of the major's testimony, we recommend the perusal of the President's printed message to Congress, on the subject of Burr's trial at Richmond; and then to contrast the major's examination, with the subjoined affidavit* of lieutenant Whitlock, a man of unquestionable veracity.

* I, Ambrose Whitlock, lieutenant in the army of the United States, do solemnly swear, that I ascended the river Mississippi with general Wilkinson, in the summer of 1805, when he went to take possession of the government of Louisiana. I was, at that time, pay-master to the troops stationed at St. Louis, and had on board of my boat a sum of money for the purpose of making payment to those troops. When we arrived in about twenty miles of St. Louis, I informed the general that the provision for my crew was exhausted, and requested his permission to go on to St. Louis as quick as possible for a supply, my boat being much lighter than his, and capable of ascending the stream with more rapidity. The general consented, and desired that I would acquaint major Bruff of his approach; and added, that it was possible the major might accompany me on the next morning to meet him. But I am persuaded that the general did not tell me to inform the major that he had any particular business with him; and I took the message only to be intended to prepare the major, who commanded at St. Louis, for the customary honors to the commander in chief. The day after which, I think, was the 2d or 3d of July, having drawn provisions for my men, and deposited my money, I returned to meet the general, accompanied by major Bruff. About seven miles from St. Louis, we discovered the general's boat on shore and put to. The general had just breakfasted, and was on the point of putting off, which our arrival did not,

The *ninth* and last, is the letter from Wilkinson to Burr, post-marked 13th May, and Burr's cyphered letter. With respect to the first, if, as Mr. Clark says, Burr was deterred from disclosing it, from an apprehension of establishing his own guilt, he surely, since his acquittal, has had no reason for concealment. Burr is now outlawed by the moral sense of the American community; he has no further hopes here. Why then not have produced it since 1807? Is the concealment to be attributed to the tender mercies of the conspirators for Wilkinson? Let the virulence with which he has been persecuted answer and silence the question. With respect to the second, the cyphered letter from Burr to Wilkinson, we will proceed to an analysis, and place the thing on its just grounds.

1. The suppression or alteration of any word in decyphering the letter by Wilkinson, so that the suppression or alteration did not affect the exposure of Burr's intention, or absolutely alter the sense, does not argue a *design* of concealment on the part of the general for sinister purposes; because that is a *substantial* interpretation of a thing, which explains the general scope and object of it. Wilkinson accounts very rationally why particular expressions were omitted, and the punctuation altered whilst he was at New Orleans, to wit: to keep from the public *at that particular time*, any phrase that could give room to the traitors, to ruin him with the honest citizens of the place, by the artifice of denouncing him as the coadjutor of Burr, which was attempted, and for a moment paralyzed his efforts.

But if he had really intended a concealment altogether, why would he furnish the key to the cypher; or indeed what need, in the first instance, of exposing the cyphered letter at all? Wilkinson could have acted against Burr

I am confident, delay more than fifteen minutes. The boats lay under a high bank, and if any private conversation really took place between the general and major Bruff, it must have been on the open beach. But I am persuaded from the short time that we remained on shore, that there was no such conversation held. We ascended the river but a short distance, when we discovered the St. Louis dragoons on shore. The general landed, and as soon as he was introduced to some of the gentlemen, he mounted his horse and instantly proceeded to St. Louis.

(Signed)

A. WHITLOCK.

Sworn to, and subscribed before me, the 13th January, 1808,

(Signed)

GEO: WALLACE, jr.

J. P. Knox County, Ind. Ter.

upon Swartwout's verbal communication, and have kept the cyphered letter out of view. Would a man who aims to conceal the contents of a cyphered letter, first decypher it *substantially*, and then give up the key to the world, for a more critical version? We say *substantially*, for the hypercritics have taken much pains, to shew that it was not a substantial explanation that Wilkinson furnished; confusing in this instance, a *verbal* interpretation, which Wilkinson did not pretend to give, with a *substantial* one, which he did give: the words omitted or changed by Wilkinson, do not implicate him. His *suppression* of them, is the only circumstance that gives color for supposing they do; and the concealment is accounted for, on grounds connected with his personal utility to the public service, in such a crisis; connect with the preceding circumstances the very *material fact which seems to have been overlooked by the foreman of the grand jury*, that Wilkinson produced to that body, *a fair duplicate of Burr's cyphered letter, sent to him by Bellman, undefaced and without the erasure or alteration of a single word or a syllable*, and no improper motive can be attached to his conduct. He stands justified in his oath and must be acquitted by public opinion.

2. A *cypher* is not generally used to conceal dark and mysterious expressions; but to conceal statements at large. It is a certain shield of protection, against all but those who possess the key. Look at this cyphered letter of Burr; there is neither accuracy nor order in it, nor does it cover an expression that implies, on the part of Wilkinson, a concurrence in Burr's schemes. If the plan had been a concurrent one, would there not have been some hint to that effect? All is mystery; and although masked in cyphers, Burr approaches Wilkinson, manifestly, without confidence, and as if he were not sure of him.

3. Can any one believe there was a combination between Burr and Wilkinson, after we look at their respective positions? Burr was evidently uninformed of what Wilkinson was about. Had Wilkinson been an associate, would he not have kept Burr advised of his movements? Would there not have been some concert? Would he have left St. Louis without even giving him notice of it?

The presumption is too absurd for a second thought.

4. There was no concert. "*Send forthwith*" (says Burr in his cyphered letter) "*an intelligent and confidential friend with whom Burr may confer; he shall return imme-*

diately with further interesting details ; this is essential to concert and harmony of movement ;" of course there had been no previous understanding as to movements ; and this call for a "*confidential friend*," was to test the general's dispositions and remove all doubts ; the affair was still to be harmonized and concerted. The whole letter indicates that he wanted (what he had not obtained) an understanding with Wilkinson. He wanted from him a list of persons westward of the mountains ; four or five officers' commissions ; points to be designated for depots of provisions. He does not say Wilkinson *had done* these things, but he *wants* him to do them. Does this look like concert, combination, or co-operation on the part of Wilkinson ? No ! they were *baits*, thrown out by Burr, who had heard Wilkinson frequently speak of the conquest of Mexico, *in case the United States should go to war with Spain*, and he hoped to allure the general to enter into the scheme, without the approbation of his country.

5. The words "*at length obtained funds*" apply to Burr's exertions and not to Wilkinson's. He does not say *we* have obtained funds, but "*I have obtained funds, and [I] have actually commenced.*" That is, Burr had actually commenced upon his own footing, without having any concert or understanding with Wilkinson ; and what do "*the eastern detachments*" imply ? That Wilkinson had detachments in the *west* ; certainly not ! It is notorious that Burr had recruits in New York, Pennsylvania, and other states, which are, relatively, east of what is called the western country ; and it was necessary these should march first, to reach the general rendezvous on the Ohio. He spoke of the *eastern* in contradistinction to the western detachments, which he had himself organized, for we know he had his associates, "*a host of choice spirits*," on the western waters : The words "*our*" and "*us*," which Burr introduces, do not conclusively refer to Wilkinson. If for example, Burr, Clark, Dayton and Adair, had concerted a scheme, and it was their aim that Wilkinson should be brought into it. Burr writing to Wilkinson and using "*our* and *us*," would allude more to his actual associates, by these words, than to Wilkinson ; "*our projects, &c.*" (that is Burr, Clark, Dayton and Adair.) But Mr. Clark admits that a letter written *to* another is not in itself complete [is it any ?] evidence of guilt, in the person to whom it is addressed ; and that a contrary doctrine, would put an innocent man

in the power of the first villain, who chose to write to him in the style of an associate." Page 128, of "Proofs."

The deliberate fraud and perfidy, and the rank dishonor, for which colonel Burr was fitted, is incontestibly proved in the subjoined letters * of the 27th November, and the

LOUISVILLE, 27th November, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

Considering the various, and extravagant reports which circulate concerning me, it may not be unsatisfactory to you to be informed (and to you there can be no better source of information than myself) that I have no wish or design to attempt a separation of the Union; that I have no connexion with any foreign power or government; that I never meditated the introduction of any foreign power or influence, into the United States, or any part of its territories; but on the contrary should repel with indignation, any proposition or measure having that tendency; in fine, that I have no project or views hostile to the interest or tranquillity or Union of the United States, or prejudicial to its government; and I pledge you my honor for the truth of this declaration.

It is true that I am engaged in an extensive speculation, and that with me are associated some of your intimate and dearest friends. The objects are such as every man of honor and every good citizen must approve. They have been communicated to several of the principal officers of our government, particularly to one high in the confidence of the administration: He has assured me my views would be grateful to the administration; indeed, from the nature of them, it cannot be otherwise; and I have no doubt of having received your active support, if a personal communication with you could have been had: accident and indispensable occupations have prevented me from visiting you for this purpose.

This explanation seemed due to the frankness of your character and your responsible station; to my own feelings, and to the attachment with which your kindness and confidence had influenced me. If I have ascribed to you a solicitude you have not felt, you will impute it to the great value I place in your esteem; and I pray that you will always believe me to be, your faithful and affectionate friend,

A. BURR.

His excellency governor Harrison.

LEXINGTON, December 24th, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

By the hand of my friend and relation, major Westcott, you will receive a news-paper containing the orders lately issued by general Jackson to the militia of west Tennessee; being the division under his command. It occurred to me that you might deem something similar to be addressed to the militia of Indiana, not inexpedient at this moment, and that the perusal of this production might be acceptable.

All reflecting men consider a war with Spain to be inevitable. In such an event I think you would not be at ease as an idle spectator. If it should be my lot to be employed, which there is reason to expect, it would be my highest gratification to be associated with you.

I pray you to believe in assurances of the very great respect and esteem with which I am, your friend, &c.

A. BURR.

His excellency governor Harrison.

24th December, 1806, which he wrote to governor Harrison.

6. There is an inconsistency and an absurdity in the letter; Burr says, "*final orders* are given to my friends and followers;" and yet the movements had not been concerted with Wilkinson; provisions had not been deposited; commissions were wanted; the boats were not constructed, and the expedition was not to move for three months afterwards.

7. "The Gods (says Burr) invite us to glory and fortune; *it remains to be seen whether we deserve the boon.*" It "*remains to be seen.*" What does Burr mean by this? Why "*it remains to be seen*, whether you, general Wilkinson, will join us (Burr, Dayton, Adair and Clark,) in *our project*, the *eastern detachments* of which will rendezvous on Ohio on first November."

8. The whole letter appears to be filled with lies. It *lies* (according to subsequent information) about "naval protection of England." It *lies* about Truxton's going to Jamaica. It *lies* about the navy of the United States being ready to join. It *lies* about daughter and husband. It *lies* about agents. And wherefore all these *lies*? If Wilkinson had been an associate, there was no reason whatever for it. But there was great reason for it if he was *not* an associate, because the more Burr magnified his means, the greater would be the inducement for Wilkinson to join him. That's the *secret* of the letter! Burr wanted to *gain* Wilkinson, and he baited his hook with funds, and detachments, and navies, (which had no existence) in order the more surely to catch him. Does not the truth flash on the reader's mind? We are very much mistaken, if the present interpretation of the cyphered letter, will not be more full than Mr. Clark desires.

9. Again, "I guarantee the result (says Burr,) with my life and honor; with the lives, the honor and fortunes of hundreds, the best blood of our country." Why this pledge? Why? Because he is making professions and offering persuasives to win Wilkinson. When one man wants to obtain another's consent to any thing equivocal, he employs the language used by Burr; we hear it every day. "Do come, go with us;" or, "join us, and we pledge our lives and honor, that you shall receive no injury." "Come buy my houses, or my lands, or my lottery tickets, and you will make your fortune." This is the current conversation in the commerce of life, and Burr naturally resorted to it, when he made the attempt

to seduce Wilkinson. Men engaged in a common concern, do not "*guarantee*" one another, for that would destroy the *community* of the undertaking; and a "*guarantee*" is only offered by one person to another, in order to prevail on that other to do something, that he supposes he may or does not want to do

10. Finally, with respect to the letter in cypher, view it as we have analyzed it, and it corresponds with the cunning which Burr is believed to possess. The letter is calculated to seduce Wilkinson from his duty, if possible; but if the attempt failed, and the letter should be exposed, to afford no clear evidence of the whole extent of Burr's real designs. Look at the letter in any other light, and the writer must appear a blockhead. Had Wilkinson been truly connected with Burr, then the latter would certainly have alluded to some previous particular engagement between them; and the want of that allusion is proof that the connexion did not exist, because the letter was not only in cypher, but was sent by a confidential agent; and yet had it been lost on the journey, the contents as they are (if discoverable out of the cypher) would have developed enough, to defeat the plan as completely, as if the particulars had been set forth at large. The effect of Burr's cunning and ambiguity cannot be denied, because it has been broadly demonstrated on the trial at Richmond, where his letter proved nothing of guilt; but on the contrary, was converted by some persons, into a testimonial of his patriotism, and an evidence of Wilkinson's perfidy. If Burr had been sure of Wilkinson; if any compact had existed between them, why should he have employed the influence of general Dayton, to corrupt him? Or is it possible he should have ceased to write to his coadjutor after the 29th of July, a space of almost five months before the explosion at New Orleans, particularly as he had crossed the mountains and reached Kentucky in September?

Thus then Mr. Clark's Proofs are totally invalidated. Let us examine cursorily his leading arguments.

1st. He says, "unless [the conspirators] were assured of the general's co-operation, they put it completely in his power to destroy their schemes and ruin its authors." "Proofs," page 130.

Answer. They could not succeed without Wilkinson's co-operation, because he was at the head of the army, which had fortunately been thrown between the conspirators and the point of their destination, and therefore it

was necessary to gain him ; and the only way to gain him was to tempt him. But if Mr. Clark had looked at Mr. Cabell's testimony before the court at Richmond, on Burr's trial, he would have discovered a more palpable motive to justify this attempt of Burr on general Wilkinson. Mr. Cabell tells the court that general Wilkinson, on his examination before the grand jury, remarked, "that he had written several letters or notes to colonel Burr, to draw from him his real design, between their interview at St. Louis and the commencement of the following summer ; that his object was to draw from colonel Burr a disclosure of the nature of the enterprise ; if it were proper, that he might participate it : if not, that he might communicate the information to the government. With respect to the letter, post marked 13th May, the general, on being interrogated, was not positive he had written it, but believed he had." Now Burr, after having employed every art, by the medium of the public prints and of private correspondence, to disaffect Wilkinson to his government and his country, on receiving a letter of encouragement from him, believed the poison had taken ; and then it was, he determined to tamper with him and test his loyalty, and for this purpose, Swartwout and Bollman were put in motion, with their letters in cypher.

2d. "He does not even, on the 21st of October, send to the President a copy of the cyphered letter." "Proofs" page 134.

Answer. The president was informed of the general's impressions touching Burr on the 21st of October, and a gentleman of the administration had previously been warned, to keep an eye on him. But in Wilkinson's situation, dubious whether Burr might not be secretly countenanced by government, it was necessary for him to reserve in his own hands, the written evidence on which he founded his information, until he heard from the President on the subject. This was necessary to his own justification, in case Burr had been sanctioned by the President ; for be it remembered, that we were then in hostile array against the Spaniards : And further, the President's proclamation which issued upon the receipt of Wilkinson's letter of the 21st October, gave the first effectual check to Burr's enterprize.

3d. "That Wilkinson kept the shipping in the harbor,"
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the money in the bank, and erected a Fort for defending the city, ("Proofs," page 137, 138) in order that Burr, when he came, might seize them."

Answer. And yet Wilkinson shipped off Burr's associates who infested New Orleans! This was a curious method of securing the city for Burr. What would Mr. Clark have said, if the general had shipped the money of the bank off too? And what will the world say of his audacity, after perusing the following proceedings of the merchants of New Orleans :

At a meeting of the merchants of the city of New Orleans, held for the purpose of taking into consideration the communications made to them this morning, by his excellency William C. C. Claiborne, and general James Wilkinson,

Paul Lannuse, esquire, in the chair ;

It was unanimously agreed, that a general and immediate embargo of all the shipping in the port, be recommended to his excellency as the best means of obtaining the desired object.

(Signed) PAUL LANNUSE, *President.*
New Orleans, December 9th, 1806.

RICHARD RELF, *Secretary.*

It may not be amiss to state, that the motives of this measure, were to facilitate the manning and equipping the armed flotilla under captain Shaw, for the defence of the city ; and it is a fact, that arrangements had been made for shipping the money of the bank, on the earliest approach of the conspirators.

There are other miscellaneous fallacies in Mr. Clark's "Proofs," which the good sense of the most careless reader will detect. Of this cast, is the letter to colonel M'Kee, to raise a corps of cavalry to go to Mexico, which finds a satisfactory solution, in the notorious rumours and expectations of a Spanish war, about the time, and the general's manifest disposition to relieve M'Kee from embarrassment, by procuring him a commission in the army, which is even acknowledged by the witness. The apparent contradiction between the general's oath, that he "*declined*" writing, and yet the admission that he wrote by post, is reconciled by the simple fact, that he declined to write by Swartwout. This letter was written to colonel Burr with the privity and approbation of colonel Burling, at a time when Wilkinson doubted the foundation of

his designs ; and it was calculated to dissuade and deter him from any unlawful enterprize ; but on receiving the information from James L. Donaldson, Wilkinson's doubts ceased, and then he recovered and destroyed the letter.

There are a great many silly and indecent reflections in Mr. Clark's book, which are overthrown by the force of our facts and strictures. But it may not be irrelevant in this place to add to the volume of our documents, a letter to captain Thomas Swaine, commanding on the Mobile river, to prepare him for the attack of the Spanish post of Mobile, [*Appendix*, No. 125.] and also a letter of the 6th November, 1806, to major Porter, [No. 126.] to press forward the preparations for defence at New Orleans.

To proceed towards a conclusion ; Mr. Clark plumes himself much upon general Wilkinson's written assurances of his innocence, as related to colonel Burr ; and the general regrets sincerely, that he should have been obliged to change his opinion of Mr. Clark. The letters to which Mr. Clark makes reference, were founded upon the convictions of the general's mind, at the time they were written, and those convictions grew out of the following circumstances :

1st. The information received from colonel Bellchase and captain Samuel Davis, of Mr. Clark's ignorance of Burr's project.

2d. Mr. Clark's letters to the general in the month of October, 1806.

3d. The integrity and friendship manifest in Mr. Clark's letter of February 22d, 1807, to the general, while he was a member of Congress ; and

4th. The decisive part Mr. Clark took, in vindication of general Wilkinson at Washington, in the winter of 1807, pending the scenes of Burr's conspiracy.

It will be shewn, in the next volume, from undeniable documents, that Mr. Clark, through a long acquaintance, had been subservient to general Wilkinson, and that the general remunerated him richly ; yet he understood Mr. Clark's character, having received it from his uncle. He knew him to be enterprizing, ardent, capricious, vain and ambitious ; but to these qualities Mr. Clark united capacities for great utility ; and from their earliest acquaintance, Wilkinson had endeavored to give them the proper direction, as his correspondence with Mr. Clark will hereafter prove ; but Wilkinson never suspected him to be a villain, before the exhibit of gross perjuries, which he of-

ferred to Congress in the year 1808, and the testimony delivered before the court of inquiry the same season, by John Graham, esq. and captain William A. Murray. Since that period, what faith has not Mr. Clark violated? What calumnies has he not invented? What sums has he not squandered? How many poor human souls has he not consigned to everlasting perdition, in the attempt to wreck his vengeance on Wilkinson? And why all this? Because the general defeated Burr's traitorous designs, and the traitor himself imposed this monstrous task on Mr. Clark, when he waited* on Burr at Richmond, pending his trial.

The delineation of Mr. Clark's character, in all its extravagant deformities, his speaking portrait, and all but living likeness, is reserved for our examination of the Spanish conspiracy. The question now is, was Mr. Clark an accomplice of colonel Burr, in his treasonable projects? Let the virulence of his resentments; let his pangs of despair at their failure, and above all, let the facts which follow speak to an unprejudiced world.

We shall close this chapter with the following report from colonel Burling to general Wilkinson, after his interview with governor Cordero at Nacogdoches; which should have been before inserted as explanatory of the delicacy of the governor's situation, and of his earnest disposition to avert hostilities.

It was this report, which warranted Wilkinson in making his last proposition to the Spanish commander, which eventuated so happily for all parties.

HEAD QUARTERS,

Camp, on the left bank of the Sabine River, Nov. 4, 1806.

SIR,

AGREEABLY to your request, I have the honor to state to you the heads of a conversation held with governor Cordero, on my late visit to him as the bearer of your despatches; but I pray leave to observe, that as his personal communications to me were informal, they cannot be considered as official, though they may serve as evidence of his wishes and opinions.

* Mr. Clark arrived at Richmond, pending Burr's trial, with his man Thomas Power, and remained there a week, yet was not called before the court, although subpoenaed by Burr; during this period, he had frequent nocturnal interviews with Burr, and there the plan of Wilkinson's destruction was settled.

Without touching the merits of the object in discussion, his excellency after having reflected on the contents of your despatch, began by expressing his regret that his subordinate situation, being under the orders of general Salcedo, put it out of his power to accede formally or officially to the terms proposed by you, which he frankly and without hesitation acknowledged to be fair and honorable for both parties, in the present situation of the two nations; but he observed, that, although he could not enter into any stipulation, he hoped your excellency would judge by what he had already done, of what his wishes were; that he had ordered his troops to re-cross the Sabine, and had given positive orders that they should not enter the disputed territory, unless some new circumstances should render it necessary. Upon my observing to him that his taking post on the Sabine, erecting barracks and making a shew of a permanent military establishment, so immediately in contact with the ground in dispute, could not be viewed without jealousy, and bore an aspect of menace, he disavowed the intention of a permanent establishment, and with much earnestness disclaimed any idea of taking a menacing attitude. He added, that he was persuaded there were evil disposed persons, who took pains to foment any misunderstanding which might arise between the two governments, and particularly as they respected this frontier, but he hoped their motives would be discovered and duly appreciated. He further observed, that he had never before found himself in so delicate a predicament; that in a state of war, the line of his conduct would be plain, in absolute peace every thing would glide on smoothly; but in this frontier dispute about limits, tied up by orders as he was, he felt extremely embarrassed, but expressed his determination to avoid any species of provocation to hostilities by every mean in his power. He concluded by expressing his veneration for your excellency's character, and his hope that your views might coincide with his, in endeavoring to avert any precipitate act of hostility.

I have the honor to be, with perfect respect, your excellency's obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

W. BURLING.

His excellency Gen. J. Wilkinson.

CHAPTER V.

THE mind of a restless, turbulent, ambitious man, is ever in a state of revolution ; yet such are the eccentricities of our nature, that we sometimes discover, in the same person, the singular combination of a steady adherence to a dominant passion, and the capricious indulgence of an hundred subordinate inclinations. Thus Mr. Clark, though ostentatious, vain, vindictive and ambitious, makes property his polar star, of which he never loses sight, and no one better understands the art of subserving his passions to his interests. A true disciple of Chartres ; he values reputation only as it may be employed to promote his interested pursuits, and although he would give an hundred thousand dollars for the character of honor, it would be merely that he might gain two hundred thousand by the purchase. We cannot better illustrate this character of Mr. Clark, than by reference to the following deposition of George Mather, esquire, an English gentleman of the most respectable character and family, who emigrated many years since from London to Louisiana, and at present enjoys an ample fortune, on the left bank of the Mississippi, near Baton Rouge :

(COPY.)

Deposition of George Mather.

TERRITORY OF ORLEANS :

George Mather, senior, aged fifty-five years, personally appeared before William Wikoff, judge of the parish of Baton Rouge, in the county of Iberville, on this 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine, and deposeth on oath : That sometime in the month of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and five, it being at or about the time when Daniel Clark, now resident in the city of New Orleans, introduced into West Florida, by the way of lakes Ponchartrain and Maurepas, a number of negro slaves for sale which had been imported from Africa, the said Clark did declare in my presence, and that of the late Daniel Hickey, esquire, at the house of the said Hickey, that he, said Clark, kept the office of post master at New Orleans, established by the merchants, and con-

ducted by Chew and Relf, the representatives of the said Clark, for the sole purpose of intercepting French letters and letters to the Spanish government, particularly those written by Yrujo, the late minister of Spain to the United States; and when Mr. Hickey remonstrated against such dishonorable conduct, the said Clark replied by the following quotation from Shakspeare: "To know our enemies minds, we rip their hearts; their papers are more lawful."

I remember perfectly to have heard the said Daniel Clark, more than once, profess his utter contempt for fair character; and declared that he despised the good opinion of the world; that mankind were a pack of rascals, who could be purchased with money; and therefore he would make it by any means, honest or dishonest, or words strictly and fully to that effect. I have also heard the said Daniel Clark declare, that his uncle, the late colonel Daniel Clark, (who was the relation, as I have always understood and believe to be the fact, who invited him to this country, as he states in his deposition laid before Congress, and whose estate he inherits,) was one of the damndest villains in the world. This declaration has been made to me frequently and without reserve by the said Clark.

GEORGE MATHER.

The foregoing affidavit was subscribed and sworn to before me, the day and year first above written.

WM. WIKOFF, Jr.

Judge of the Parish of Baton Rouge.

The motives of Mr. Clark's professed attachment and proffered services to the United States, have been solved by his posterior conduct, and are imputable to his views of personal aggrandizement. Anticipating the transfer of Louisiana, he did not hesitate to barter the patronage of Spain, under which he had been fostered from his early youth, for that of the American government, to which he was a stranger. Flushed with hopes, he communicated his expectations to his friends in England; and his sister in Liverpool, mentioned the appointment of her brother to the new government, before we had even got possession of New Orleans.

But these expectations were blasted; he was neither named in the commission for receiving the province, nor

appointed to the government ; and his chagrin was manifest and profound : he boasted of his services ; complained of neglect ; and condemned the executive for slighting his merits. Yet, impatient of power, and relying on his intrigue, he attempted to acquire an ascendant over governor Claiborne, but failing after several fruitless efforts, he conceived a most diabolical plan to destroy Claiborne and rise on his ruin. Five or six weeks after we had taken possession of Louisiana, Mr. Clark called on the governor, and very gravely inquired of him, whether he was "really invested with the powers of a Spanish Captain General?" Being answered in the affirmative, he exclaimed, "Great God! and yet in six week's time you have not given to the people the smallest demonstration of power." "Why," replied the governor, "what would you have me do? The people give no cause for punishments." "No cause!" answered Mr. Clark, "It is necessary you should exercise your authority, to make the people respect the government ; immediately order some citizen of distinction, wealth and influence, to be arrested ; confine him in the public prison, on some charge of treason or sedition ; then, after a few days, feign some pretext for the removal of your suspicions, and release him under the shew of liberality and clemency. If you hesitate to follow this advice, the American government and yourself will soon be despised ; you shall be at no difficulty in selecting a proper subject, for you may make me the victim ; I will submit to any act of rigor you may inflict." The governor beheld the man with astonishment, and positively refused to listen to a proposition so tyrannical. We have governor Claiborne's authority for the fact, and if Clark had succeeded to surprize him into such an act of outrage upon his own person, he would have triumphed.

From that moment Mr. Clark threw off the mask, and putting himself at the head of the mal-contents, he fanned the flames of discord, and exerted every faculty to harrass the governor and disaffect the inhabitants of Louisiana to the general government. It was not long after this, Mr. Clark declared to doctor Watkins, that "*if he had children, the first words he should teach them to speak, would be to damn the government of the United States.*" We are not then to wonder at his letters to general Wilkinson, from which the following are faithful extracts : "October 10th,

" 1804. I have encouraged, and will continue to encourage, the outcry and opposition to their measures, (the executive.) I have made the tour of the western parts of the country, through the Isovoyells, Rapide, Natchitoches, Ouichita, Apaloussa and Attackapa, (a distance of 1000 miles :) have every where pointed out to the people, assembled at my call in every parish, the disregard and the violation of their rights." From the same to the same. " November 22d, 1804. I have always thought the government of the United States, would do as little for Louisiana as it could possibly avoid, and if they dare, would probably attempt to stifle the little Hercules in its cradle. You perceive and tremble at the idea of the seat of government being removed west of the mountains, *or a secession of those countries, at a future day from the Union*, and therefore would wish to retard their growth. Our deputies sailed the beginning of last month, and are doubtless before this in Washington. I presume that they will pestter the government, though they may obtain nothing for us. New occurrences happen daily, to occasion further discontents. Eight or nine of our legislature have refused to serve, and no council can be assembled, till the President sends out blank commissions, to be filled up with the names of such as Claiborne can find to accept them." From the same to the same. " New Orleans, 18th February, 1805. Mr. Harries, who saw you, I believe at Washington, is now here, and has told me the strangest thing I ever heard repeated of you, viz : That you strongly and loudly advocated the necessity of Claiborne's being continued in the government of this territory, saying he was the only man on earth fit for it — What in the name of God does this mean? I cannot comprehend it.

" This wretch is made unhappy by the death of his brother in law, young Lewis, who fell in a duel last week, with a young lawyer of the name of Sterry, the particulars of which you will see in the Louisiana gazette. He has, besides, been attacked on all sides, and is, I believe, heartily sick of us. We are equally so of him, and I wish we could fairly get rid of him. No man holds him in more consummate contempt than Mr. James Brown of Kentucky, our late secretary. This gentleman, was here two months, and Claiborne never

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“indulged him with the sight of any one letter or paper
 “whatever. *For God’s sake do not desert us, nor to please
 “the administration, do not raise your voice in defending
 “the character of the man, who degrades the empire, and
 “is your own most inveterate and implacable enemy.*

“I remain, dear Sir, yours, sincerely,

“DANIEL CLARK.”

“P. S. I congratulate you on Laussat’s *mention honorable* of you, in his intercepted correspondence.”*

These testimonies, to which others might be added, demonstrate the revolutionary spirit of Mr. Clark, and the bitterness of his resentments. We find his mind rankling with animosity, and his views directed to the disruption of the Union, at so early a period as November, 1804, before such an idea could have entered the head of Burr; and it is the opinion of many persons in New Orleans, that Clark, Workman, Kerr and their associates, stimulated Burr to his desperate undertaking.

Colonel Burr certainly found Mr. Clark in this temper of mind at New Orleans in July, 1805, and therefore it can be no matter of surprize, that their sympathies should have united them in the daring project of a severance of the Union; and the fact is strongly corroborated by the following striking incident, which we are authorised to make public. When Burr visited New Orleans in the year 1805, Mr. Daniel Clark and a Mr. J. Blanque (now of the legislative council of the territory) dined in company with him at Mr. Morales’, the former Spanish intendant of Louisiana. After the service of meats, the company retired to a balcony to make way for the introduction of the desert; Mr. Clark took Mr. Blanque apart, and addressing him, observed, “that such were the contrariety of interests, between the eastern and western divisions of the American government, the period could not be distant when a separation would necessarily take place, and he hoped Mr. Blanque, as a man of fortune and influence would favor it.” Mr. Blanque replied, that it was “a subject on which he had indulged no consideration, but it appeared to him, *prima*

*This is the correspondence since quoted by Mr. Clark, to convict Wilkinson of being a Spanish pensioner.

facie, that the measure would be attended with much difficulty." Mr. Clark answered, "we want only a man to head the undertaking, who, to enterprize and decision, adds national character, talents and popularity." Mr. Blanque observed, that "so rare a combination of qualities, was seldom to be found in the same person." We have found such a man (said Clark) and yonder he is," pointing to colonel Burr, who was engaged in conversation at the opposite end of the gallery: A call to the table, here broke up the conversation. What stronger proof can be offered, of Mr. Clark's early association with colonel Burr, than this unequivocal attempt to enlist Mr. Blanque in their sinister designs? Our plan is matured; there is our leader, pointing to Burr; at least you must not oppose us. This is the language of Mr. Clark to Mr. Blanque, a man of the first rank, fortune and intelligence in the councils of the territory of Orleans. Combine this conversation to Mr. Clark's letter to general Wilkinson, of the 7th September, 1805, written soon after, and we have a satisfactory solution of the motives which directed that application to the general.

But laying aside these evidences of Mr. Clark's guilt, we possess those that cannot be resisted, by the most hardened of his adherents, which we shall now proceed to exhibit. The first is the following letter from Mr. Clark to general Wilkinson, bearing date the 14th of April, 1806, after his second trip to Vera Cruz.

DEAR SIR,

I WROTE to you in the month of August of last year, enclosing plots and titles of sundry tracts of land, I own in the Louisiana territory, and requesting you would be kind enough to have them registered and approved by the board of commissioners. I have not since then heard from you, and being uncertain whether the packet reached you, feel very uneasy on that account; be pleased to dissipate my fears, by giving me some information on the subject. I shall remain here during the summer and your letters by post will not fail to reach me. I have been since I last wrote to you in the *land of promise*; but what is more surprising, I have got safe from it, after having been represented to the viceroy, as a person dangerous to the Spanish government, and who had visited that country with no other view than that of ac-

quiring information of its strength, and how and where it might be assailed with the greatest probability of success. I knew all this before undertaking the last voyage, but was fool hardy enough to attempt it. I have made some money, and acquired more knowledge of the country, its productions and resources, and made our country better known to them than they were before. There is you know, no harm in this interchange of useful information, and at a future period I shall communicate to you all I have picked up during my stay there. Give me some news of what is passing in your country, and how you are situated in it.

Yours most sincerely.

(Signed) DANIEL CLARK.

James Wilkinson, Esquire.

It appears from this letter that Mr. Clark had not heard from general Wilkinson in eight months, from August 1805, until April, 1806, and so far it proves that the general could not have been intimately concerned in his schemes; but if we take those parts of this letter, which relate to the "land of promise," the perils which Mr. Clark encountered, and the intrigues which are developed, in connexion with his letter of the 7th September, 1805, it will be found to make a part of the same piece, in which he cautiously and artfully exposes to Wilkinson, the progress of the conspiracy and his agency in it: Should sympathy resist, or incredulity deny the fairness of these deductions, we make reference to the deposition of John Graham, esquire, in which Mr. Clark stands self convicted from his own lips, and fully explains the objects of his repeated visits to Vera Cruz.

Extract from the deposition of John Graham, Esq. delivered before the court of inquiry at Washington, in January, 1808.

Q. What conversations have you ever had with the said Daniel Clark, concerning a Mexican expedition or Burr's conspiracy?

A. There have some communications passed between Mr. Clark and myself, which I would not wish, without an indispensable necessity, to make public, on account of their bearing upon some delicate points in relation to a foreign nation. I will however relate the substance of what passed, and leave it to the discretion of the court

and the judge advocate, to decide whether it would necessarily advance the purposes of justice to use it as evidence, and under what reserves and restrictions as to the publicity to be given to it.

In the winter of 1805-6, while I was acting as secretary of the Orleans territory, a gentleman of New Orleans, informed me that Mr. Daniel Clark, of that city, had some important information which he wished to communicate to the government, but which he did not choose to communicate through governor Claiborne. This produced an acquaintance between Mr. Clark and myself; he gave me some papers, extracts of which I copied and sent on to the secretary of state; these papers related to the affairs of Mexico, and gave rise to a conversation about that country.

Q. Of what did those papers principally consist?

A. That is a part of the subject to which, I confess, I could have wished in particular, not to speak, as it might be disagreeable or inconvenient to Mr. Clark to have it known to the Spanish government; he had been engaged in making such observations, while passing through their territory, as these papers seemed to indicate. I will however not hesitate to submit it to the discretion of the court upon the principle before mentioned.

Among those papers were estimates of the military force of the country; both the regulars and militia, particularly of the garrison-towns between Vera Cruz and Mexico; also of the naval force at Vera Cruz. Mr. Clark at the same time shewed me the baron Humboldt's statistical tables, in the Spanish language.

Q. Had not Mr. Clark then lately returned from a journey through the Spanish provinces?

A. I understood he had lately returned from Vera Cruz. I was induced by the apparent probability of a war with Spain, and by my belief that Mr. Clark's acquaintance with the situation of the country, would enable him to give important information on the subject, to make several inquiries of Mr. Clark concerning Mexico: he was of opinion it might be invaded with every prospect of success. I asked him, whether, if the United States should undertake the invasion he would bear a part; he *evidenced an unwillingness to have any thing to do with an expedition carried on by the government; but expressed himself willing to join in such an enterprize undertaken and*

carried on by individuals. He said all they would want would be the permission, not the aid of the government ; *that they would cast off all connexion with the country they left, and establish a new empire of their own.* He mentioned hypothetically, addressing himself to me, now suppose such a person as yourself should join in the expedition, *you might be made a duke.* I answered that my republican notions would not allow me to aspire to any such distinction, and that I would have nothing to do with any expedition not conducted by the government. Here the conversation, on that subject, ended. He asked several questions what Burr was doing. Colonel Burr had been in New Orleans the summer preceding.

The next document we shall offer, is the information of Mr. R. Higinbotham, [*Appendix, No. 127.*] a gentleman of unimpeachable character, which states a conversation between a Mr. Thiesen and a Mr. Shrader, both men of respectability, and both foreigners, but the last a citizen, the first an alien. Mr. Shrader, from motives of delicacy declined giving his testimony, and Mr. Thiesen when called on could not charge his memory with particulars ; [*Appendix, No. 128.*] but he had some recollection of the conversation, to which Mr. Higinbotham alludes, and which no doubt took place.

The following extract of a letter from G. W. Odgen to Peter V. Ogden, the emissary of Burr, mentioned in general Dayton's letter to colonel Cushing, who accompanied Swartwout to the Mississippi, and was seized and deported by general Wilkinson, carries with it an aspect of very strong suspicion.

NEW YORK, *November 12th, 1805.*

I enclose also a draft on Mr. D. Clark, which I have no doubt will be paid, for \$250: this I have drawn without particular directions or even a letter of advice to him. I trust however he will honor it on my account, and with me it will be passed to the credit of the lands.

Endorsed on the interior of the letter.

\$250 Exchange. *New York, November 12th, 1805.*

Twenty days after sight, of this my only bill, pay to the

order of Mr. Peter V. Ogden, two hundred and fifty dollars, which charge to the account of

Your humble servant,

GEO. W. OGDEN.

Daniel Clark, Esq. Merchant, New Orleans.

Waving the peculiar irregularity of this transaction, which warrants the suspicion of some latent association, let us inquire what "lands" was the money to be passed to the credit of? Mr. Clark denied at Richmond, in 1806, to the author of these sheets, that he ever had any land transactions with Mr. Ogden, and also that Mr. Ogden was not authorised to draw on him; yet it is scarcely credible that Mr. Ogden would have been guilty of such an unmercantile act, or have hazarded the payment of a draft, which was intended for the accommodation of a brother, a stranger in a distant country. "Lands!" the reference will bring to the reader's recollection, the Ouichita purchase, which was employed as a bye word, and no doubt was used in this case, with the perfect understanding of Mr. Clark. The suspicion of a connexion and acquaintance between P. V. Ogden and Mr. Clark, is justified by the declaration of Ogden to captain Murray, when under guard. "Ogden," says captain Murray, "spoke a great deal about Burr's plan, and in vindication of it, said general Wilkinson was the only traitor; and that Clark (meaning Daniel Clark) *would make him pay dear for it.*" If no previous correspondence or understanding had subsisted between Mr. Ogden and Mr. Clark, how could the former have become acquainted, at that early stage of the conspiracy, with Mr. Clark's obligations to persecute Wilkinson? A prediction which has been since so strictly verified. Ostensibly and professedly, Mr. Clark was general Wilkinson's friend, at the time; Mr. Ogden, could not, therefore, have calculated on his hostility to the general, but from the actual knowledge that his measures were opposed to Mr. Clark's *views and engagements.* Let us develope the facts! Ogden bore despatches from Burr to Clark; parted with Swartwout at Fort Adams, and proceeded to New Orleans. It was from this source, Clark derived his information of Burr's movements; and on receiving it he assembled his friends, Bellchase, Derbigny, De La Croix, Bouligny and Davis, to a confidential meeting, and with them he (in conclave) went

through the farce to which he now appeals, in vindication of his innocence; but did Mr. Clark make any communication to the governor of the territory, before he left Orleans, of the dangers which were impending, or to the executive of the United States after he reached Washington? No! To these authorities he was dumb; and yet on the 22d of February, 1807, whilst a member of Congress, Mr. Clark employs the veil of friendship and the guise of patriotism, to intimidate Wilkinson from that decisive course which saved the country, in order to facilitate the project of his "leader, colonel Burr." The situation and circumstances under which this letter was written, give it a title to a place in the body of this work.

"WASHINGTON, *February 22d*, 1807.

"DEAR SIR,

"MY former letters will have advised you of the sensation produced here by the news from Orleans, and the arrival of Bollman, Swartwout and Alexander. I always thought, and have not failed to mention it to your friends, that I looked upon their measures as ill timed and injudicious; and my comment on their effort to serve you in suspending the habeas corpus act, must have proved to you that I foresaw the consequences better than them. Adair and Ogden have been discharged by judge Nicholson, at Baltimore; Bollman and Swartwout by the supreme court here; Alexander by judge Ducket, one of the circuit court; and all your friends are of opinion, that if you do not take care you will injure yourself. I now for the third,* and the last time, that I shall have the opportunity of addressing you from here, advise you to arrest and send on no one whatever to this place. Let what will be the consequence, leave them to the law in Orleans; do your duty; defend your country, but do not restrain the due course of law. You are calumniated from all quarters; and believe me if the sense of the people should be found hostile to your conduct, you will be abandoned by the administration. Ferdinand Claiborne has written strange things to the delegate of the Mississippi territory respecting you, and among matters, mentions his belief of your having received 10,000 dollars, at Orleans, of the Spaniards when you went to take possession. I have pointed out the

* This was the only letter general Wilkinson received of the three.

" utter impossibility of such a thing, and I believe general Smith to whom I have been at pains to give an opinion on that subject will mention to you. My advice to you is to be prudent. I shall leave this city in a week and will return home by Pittsburg. Write to me directing your letters to be left at the post office at the Falls of Ohio and Natchez until called for. I have a great deal to communicate to you.

" I remain, dear Sir, yours sincerely.

(Signed) " DANIEL CLARK."

Brigadier General Wilkinson.

In this letter Mr. Clark makes specific reference, to a slander imputed to Ferdinand Claiborne, which he says he specifically contradicted; and hence he may attempt to justify the falsehoods he has since proclaimed, by taking a distinction between the receipt of this \$10,000 and the long standing pension which he now imputes to general Wilkinson, but an unanswerable argument may be opposed to such sophistry: Was Clark a man of honor and entitled to credit, it is impossible he could have taken the active interest in behalf of a venal pensioner, which, by his own correspondence, he manifests for general Wilkinson; and if he lived not within the pale of honor and veracity, no regard is to be reposed in his word or his oath. "*I now,*" says Mr. Clark, "*for the third and the last time, advise you to arrest and send on no one to this place, let what will be the consequence, leave them to the law in Orleans;*" in other words, "suffer the traitors to levy forces, to arm and organize themselves under your eyes, and do not attack them unless they attack you;" the consequences of which, Mr. Clark well understood, would have been Wilkinson's overthrow and Burr's triumph; but to conceal the real intention, he adds "do your duty, defend your country, but do not restrain the due course of the law;" and at the moment of giving this advice, Mr. Clark knew perfectly well, that a part of the bench and the bar, were active partizans of Burr.

If Wilkinson had followed this admonition, he would have done Burr's business and the country would have been lost; and to give it effect, Mr. Clark adds "you are calumniated from all quarters, and believe me should the sense of the people be found hostile to your conduct, you will be abandoned by the administration;" but such frightful predictions however well founded, could not af-

fect Wilkinson's sense of obligation and duty to his country. When brought before the court in Orleans, he observed, "why talk to an officer of legal penalties, when the safety of his country is at hazard ; can such things change that man's course, who would glory to lay down his life at any moment, in the public service? What has not Wilkinson suffered for the indulgence of this sentiment? But does he regret it? No! It was inhaled with the revolution, and rests on immutable principles.

The last document we shall offer, on the present occasion, to prove Mr. Clark's hostility to the United States, and his co-operation with Burr, in his conspiracy, is the following extract from the testimony of captain William A. Murray, delivered before the court of inquiry at Washington, in January, 1808. Although Mr. Clark would not attend the examination of this witness, he afterwards called on the captain and conjured him, by all the feelings of humanity and every bond of friendship, to reconsider and retract his testimony: He pathetically exclaimed that it would ruin him, and without disputing the fact, that captain Murray had received the advice which he, on his oath, imputes to Mr. Clark, this impostor endeavored to transfer the infamy of the transaction from himself, to Waters Clark of New Orleans: But Murray continued unmoved, and to satisfy Mr. Clark of the authenticity of his statement, he named to him, time, place and circumstances.

Extract of the deposition of Captain William A. Murray, delivered before the court of inquiry in Washington, January, 1808.

Question. When did lieutenant Taylor and yourself arrive at New Orleans ; and what further did you learn there concerning the Mexican association ?"

Answer. We arrived in New Orleans sometime in May 1806. Lieutenant Taylor and myself were invited to dine with a gentleman there, whose name was on the list before mentioned. It was judge Workman. We there dined together. After the cloth was removed, Mr. Lewis Kerr came in : A conversation ensued about Baton Rouge, and the Spanish territories ; particularly the means of taking Baton Rouge : I observed, if the United States would make me a colonel, I would take it with five and twenty men or forfeit my head. Previous to entering upon this conversation, I recollect Mr. Lewis Kerr asked, "Is Murray one of us?" I answered I was

no freemason and knew nothing of the science. Taylor immediately exclaimed, "Yes by God, he is one of us."

After a number of inquiries about Baton Rouge and the Red river country, they proceeded to lay open their plan of seizing upon the money in the banks at New Orleans, impressing the shipping, taking Baton Rouge, and joining Miranda by way of Mexico. I had never been expressly informed that the government of the United States authorised the expedition, nor had I particularly inquired; but when I found that the expedition was seriously contemplated, I took up the undoubting impression that it was secretly authorised by the government: When however, I discovered they entertained the design of violating private property, by impressing the shipping and robbing the banks, I immediately declared I would not disgrace my commission and the country that gave me birth, by having any thing to do with it; for when they had explained to me the nature and extent of their plan, I inquired how they were to be furnished with the necessary supplies; whether by the government or by individual contribution; and when they mentioned that as the banks were guarded only by regular soldiers, they might, if the officers could be brought over, easily seize upon the money, and return it in the case they were ultimately successful in the enterprize. It immediately struck me, and I believe I observed to them, at the time, that if the expedition was really authorised by the government, it was incredible they should begin by robbing the United States, as the government could easily supply the necessary funds without appearing in the affair, though they might not like to appear openly in furnishing troops."

"*Question.* Did you mention this conversation and the propositions made to you at judge Workman's, to Daniel Clark, and what did he say on the subject?"

"*Answer.* I did relate to Mr. Clark all that passed at judge Workman's. He (Mr. Clark) was my confidential, and indeed, the only friend I had in New Orleans, except Lieutenant Taylor. When I told Mr. Clark that I was calculated on as the officer to attack Baton Rouge, he advised me by all means to do it; he urged, as an inducement, that he was coming on to Congress and would do all he could in my favor; that he would represent to the government, that it would require a large force to retake it; and he further observed that, at any rate, if the government should be disposed to trouble me, before they

could send off a sufficient force, *I should be in a situation to take care of myself.*"

"*Question.* Had you P. V. Ogden under guard after he was seized at New Orleans?"

"*Answer.* I had; both P. V. Ogden and James Alexander."

"*Question.* Had you any conversation with Ogden respecting Burr's enterprize?"

"*Answer.* Ogden spoke a great deal about Burr's plan and in vindication of it."

"*Question.* Did either of them speak of Daniel Clark as connected with the plan?"

"*Answer.* It was Ogden, I think, for Alexander spoke but little, speaking of Burr and his projects, said that "general Wilkinson was the only traitor, and that Clark "would make him pay dear for it."

The reader will be pleased to take notice, that this testimony of captain Murray, has never been questioned by the partizans of Mr. Clark, and that Mr. Clark himself does not even glance at it in his book, although it so vitally affects his character. The veracity of captain Murray, who long since retired to private life, has never been doubted, and, in this instance, his testimony must be taken from Mr. Clark's silence, *pro confesso*. What then do we behold? Daniel Clark, a member of the Congress of the United States, in co-operation with Aaron Burr, combining and complotting with James Workman, Lewis Kerr, and a band of conspirators in New Orleans, "to seize upon the money in the banks;* to impress the shipping; to take Baton Rouge, and join Miranda by way of Mexico," and in the prosecution of these atrocious purposes, we find him endeavouring to seduce a subaltern from his duty; to excite him to raise his arms against that very government which he had sworn to defend, and of which Mr. Clark was, at the time, a member; and by way of "inducement, urged that he was coming on to Congress and would do all he could in the subaltern's favor; that he would represent to the government, that it would require a large force to retake it, (Ba-

* We now behold this same Mr. Clark, a director of the Branch Bank, in New Orleans; and Evan Jones, esquire, who urged Wilkinson, with all his force and eloquence, to join Burr and aid him in "*pulling down the detestable government under which we live, to make way for a better,*" President of that bank. These appointments were received and spoken of in New Orleans by certain distinguished public officers, as conclusive testimony of Clark's triumph, and Wilkinson's disgrace. What unequal distributions of favour do the times exhibit!

ton Rouge) and further observed that, at any rate, if the government should be disposed to trouble him, (the subaltern) before they could send off a sufficient force, *he would be in a situation to take care of himself.*" What was this "situation" to which Mr. Clark alluded? Certainly some protectionary force against the authority of the United States; and from whence was it to come? From Spain? No! Because she was the power to be attacked. From France nothing could be expected, and our relations with Great Britain forbid her interference. It is evident then, Mr. Clark could look no where but to colonel Burr and the Ohio, for such force as would place Murry "in a situation to take care of himself." This exposition appals the audacity even of Mr. Clark himself, and must strike dumb his most desperate advocates: How lost to patriotism; how steeped in profligacy, must be the wretch, who could endeavor to convert a youth of honor into a military traitor; and at the same time, determine to prostitute the confidence of his fellow citizens, to the subversion of the very government which he had been elected to support; and yet this traitor, his associates and dependents, have been employed, and are still encouraged, to persecute and destroy the man who baffled their sinister projects. Could the correspondence which have ensued the last session of Congress, and the measures which have been proposed, concerted and adopted, to insure Wilkinson's ruin, be exposed to the public eye; intrigues as extensive as they are unnatural and vindictive, would be unveiled, to put those men to the blush, on whose cheeks "shame is not ashamed to sit." That such things should be, is an affliction to humanity; that they should be countenanced in the United States, is a national reproach.

Here, for the present, we leave Mr. Clark, and shall close this chapter with the following depositions of captain William Tharp, and the certificate of P. Grimes, esquire, which will furnish the reader a glimpse of the ramifications, and the extent of the intrigues and combinations of Wilkinson's enemies to effect his ruin. Sterrett is a miserable dependent of Mr. Clark, and now co-editor of the Louisiana Gazette in New Orleans, notoriously hostile to the government, and devoted to Clark. One of the depositions squints also at the occult connexion between Mr. Simmons and Mr. Randolph; *par nobile fratrum.*

"ON the morning of the 16th September, about one o'clock, Mr. Ballard met me, and named that he had seen a friend of mine, who had inquired of him, if he had seen

me, and from his countenance it appeared he had some particular business with me, but at that moment he could not recollect his name, but that if I would go to the coffee house I would find him there. I went, but no gentleman approached me, who had any business with me, that I could suppose was the one Mr. B. alluded to. On my return to my lodgings, at the corner above the coffee house, while conversing with captain Rinker, Mr. James Sterrett of this place, and formerly captain of artillery, came up and observed that he had been looking some time for me, and that he had a conversation for me of importance, and that he must see me on it: when could he have an interview with me at my lodgings? I replied at any time. Tomorrow morning said he. I answered, no objections, but tell me the outlines. He said he would, I can say it in a few words: you know well the situation of the general and Clark, one or other of them must fall, and I know it will be the former. How are you treated by the general? I answered as I could wish. I will be damned, as I've always told you, if he don't lurch you one day or other, and leave you deserted. I know you and him have been long friends. but he will desert you in the same way he has *all his old* friends*. You have it now in your power to *make a friend who is able and will serve you to the utmost of your wishes, if you can give any statement against the general of consequence; but I don't believe you can. Clark will give you a plantation and negroes, that will make you comfortable for life.* I have not spoken to him on the subject, but I will give a guarantee from under my hand, that you shall have it. I do solemnly declare on honor, that the annexed statement, is nearly verbatim, the conversation that passed between captain Sterrett and myself, and in substance the whole truth.

(Signed)

W. THARP."

New Orleans, Sept. 25, 1809.

WE, the undersigned, certify on honor, that the above statement was presented to general Wilkinson on this day, the 25th September, 1809, in our presence.

(Signed)

DANIEL CARMICK,

Major of Marines.

JOHN R. FENWICK,

Captain of Marines.

* This is the source of Wilkinson's misfortunes, his desertion of his old friends when they turned traitors.

HE, Sterrett, further declared, at the mention of the plantation and negroes, as a *douceur* to me for information against the general, that money with Mr. Clark was no object, let the price be what it might, to obtain information against the general, he, Clark, would have it, let it cost what it would.

(Signed)

W. THARP.

Mississippi Territory,
Adams County, Feb. 10, 1810. }

WILLIAM THARP, thirty-four years of age, personally appearing before me, the undersigned, a justice of the peace in and for said county, and having the within declarations read to him, *both of* which are signed with his name, declared that *they were in all their* statements the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

SAMUEL BROOKS, J. P.

Note. The words *both of* and *they were in all their*, interlined before sworn to.

IV. Tharp's Deposition.

(Copy.)

SOME time about the 15th of October last, in the city of New Orleans, I met in the street captain James Sterrett, formerly of the army. We passed on to his compting house, where we entered into conversation on the subject of general James Wilkinson. After about ten minutes, he took out of his pocket a letter which he had just received from William Simmons, accountant of the war department, the last paragraph of which he shewed to me. It ran thus, "I have it in my power to state, that I have been for a length of time very busily employed in ransacking the war department, for evidence of the earliest date against your *old friend* general W. for the purpose of being used at the coming session of Congress by the honorable John Randolph." After having traced the language, I scrutinized carefully the signature of W. Simmons, and have not the smallest hesita-

tion to say it was his hand, having been intimately acquainted with it for twelve years past.

The above, I pledge my honor, is the substance and facts as came to my view.

W. THARP.

Mississippi Territory, Adams County, Feb. 10, 1810.

WILLIAM THARP, personally appearing on oath, deposeth and saith, that the foregoing statement to which he hath subscribed his name, is just and true.

Before,

SAMUEL BROOKE, J. P.

After communicating to general W. major Carmick, captain Fenwick and several other gentlemen, the attempt made on me by the late captain Sterrett, on behalf of Daniel Clark as he alledged, to suborn me to give testimony against general Wilkinson, I determined to mislead and, if practicable, to procure some testimonial of his villany, which design I made known to the gentlemen before named. For this purpose at the second interview, I led him to believe I had in my possession, some important documents from the hands of the general, which he was extremely anxious to get possession of, and I was as desirous to procure from him some written evidence of his corrupt designs; but my plan was, in this point, frustrated, as I understood from major Carmick, by the interference and advice given by serjeant M'Kinzie, formerly of the 4th regiment, to Sterrett and Clark. Sterrett informed me M'Kinzie was in Clark's confidence, and was employed as a secret agent by him, and Sterrett assured me, had acted his part beyond all expectation as a spy and informer, and had completely imposed on governor Claiborne.

In the prosecution of my views, I had several meetings with Sterrett, and on the 30th September last, the following conversation took place, which I minuted down the same day, and have now before me.

He, Sterrett, declared to me, that he had labored and exerted every nerve to ruin general Wilkinson, and that he would continue to do so to the last, and that during the ensuing session of Congress, the *General would fall*, and all his friends with him; this he knew to be certain; that he was confirmed in this belief by a letter he had recently received *from a correspondent** who stood high with

* This advice was no doubt from Mr. Sterrett's correspondent, Mr. Simmons, who, if we may judge from events, seems to have had a peep

Mr. Jefferson, who had been assured by him, that Mr. J. was now convinced that Wilkinson was guilty, and *that he would be this session either broke, or the army would be so modelled as to get him out of service*; that for all his (Sterrett's) exertion, he consoled himself with a full assurance that he should live to see Wilkinson what he ought to be,

into futurity; and to the same source may be ascribed the circumstance of the arrangements of the war department, always reaching Mr. Clark and his friends, before they did gen. Wilkinson. The presumption is justified by the accountant's agency, in circulating Clark's libellous book; and it is a fact that the general's recal was known to Adair at Natchez, two weeks before it reached himself. Among others, a Mr. Bigelow mentioned the report to the general, before he had received his orders: and with a view, it is presumed, to *accelerate his movement and facilitate his vindication at Washington in Columbia*; the following billet was served on the general about the period of his recal, in the full expectation, he is well assured, that it would *commit him to jail, at Washington, in the Mississippi territory*. Such is the co-operation of Wilkinson's enemies, from the seat of government to the banks of the Mississippi; such is the concert of Randolph, and Adair, and Clark, and Simmons, and Sterrett, and an hundred other worthies. And now while Wilkinson is detained at Washington, Columbia, judgment may go against him in Washington, Mississippi territory, for \$40,000, as Adair's writ was succeeded by another of the same character, doubtless at the instigation of Mr. Clark. These are small specimens of the pecuniary rewards which Wilkinson receives for serving and saving his country.

Mississippi Territory, }
Adams County, } TO WIT.

The Mississippi Territory of the United States, to the Sheriff of Adams County, GREETING:

You are hereby commanded, without delay, to take James Wilkinson, wheresover he may be found in your county, and him safely keep, so that you have his body before the judges of territory aforesaid, at a circuit court, to be holden at the court house in and for the county of Adams, on the second Monday in April next, to answer to John Adair, in a plea of trespass, assault and battery and false imprisonment, to his damages twenty thousand dollars, and have then there this writ. Witness the honorable Thomas Rodney, esquire, first judge of the said territory, at the court house of said county, the second Monday in October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine, and in the thirty-fourth year of the sovereignty and independence of the United States of America.

(Signed)

THEODORE STARKE.

Issued the ninth day of October, 1809. Received the
day of 1809.

This is an action for an assault and battery, and false imprisonment of the plaintiff, done and committed by the defendant, and no bail required unless ordered by a judge.

(Signed)

TURNER, P. Q.

Let bail be taken in this case for seven thousand dollars, for cause shewn by affidavit, October 25th, 1809.

(Signed)

THOMAS RODNEY.

an outcast and a vagabond. After this we parted, and met again in the coffee house, walked a few minutes together, and he observed I had better not be seen with him, that it might do me injury.

And I do further declare, that I served under general Wilkinson, as an officer of dragoons, from the summer 1797, until the spring 1802. I have been well acquainted with him since, and that I have never heard from him directly or indirectly, by word or writing, a sentiment unworthy a faithful servant of his country; that he never hinted to me a word respecting any Mexican expedition, or of colonel Burr or his projects, and that the first intimation I received of Burr's conspiracy was from Thomas Power, who I met* at Joseph Michel's tavern in the parish of Mashac, being then in company with James Sterrett, who has been mentioned in this deposition, *who, after a few words, withdrew the said Power from my presence, for what cause I know not.*

And I do further declare, that on the route from Mashac to New Orleans, the said Sterrett declared to me that Wilkinson was playing the devil in Orleans, and that the citizens of the place ought to oppose him and his measures by force; that he could not be trusted, and he was then only preparing the means to take advantage of the credulity of the citizens to mislead them the more.

This inimical spirit he evinced until we halted at captain Richard Butler's, about 24 miles from Orleans; here he had an interview with Mr. B. and after we mounted, he then assured me he was fully persuaded from the development which Mr. Butler gave him of the measures adopted by general Wilkinson, were calculated to promote the best interests of the general government, and security to the persons and property of the citizens of New Orleans, and from this forward he should be the warm friend of general W. that they had long been enemies, that he now would be glad of an opportunity of taking him by the hand and burying all animosities, and requested me to mention the subject to the general, and inform him how he would be received on waiting on him at his quarters. Agreeable to the request, I did so. In reply the general observed, *"he wait on me! if the villain dare enter my door, I'll kick him out. No, he is a scoundrel, and tell him so."*

W. THARP.

* This was in December, 1806.

Mississippi Territory, }
Adams County, Feb. 10, 1810. }

WILLIAM THARP personally appearing on oath, deposeth and saith, that the foregoing statement to which he hath subscribed his name, is just and true.

Before,

SAMUEL BROOKS, *J. P.*

Certificate of P. Grimes, Esquire.

NEW ORLEANS, *October 2d, 1809.*

SIR,

IN answer to your inquiry of this morning, I have to inform you, that on the third day of October, in the year 1808, Mr. Daniel Clark of this city, in conjunction with Mr John Clay, became bound to me, as the United States' attorney for the district of Orleans, in the sum of seven thousand three hundred and thirty-three dollars and ninety cents for captain James Sterret, late district pay-master to the army of the United States, which sum was the balance then stated to be due from said Sterret to the United States on account of monies received by him as pay-master, but which was afterwards upon a farther investigation and adjustment of his disbursement, reduced to the sum of five thousand two hundred and seven dollars thirty-six cents.

I have the honor to be, with consideration of high respect, your obedient servant,

P. GRIMES.

His Excel. Gen. J. Wilkinson, New Orleans.

Here we have a few, a very few, of the many evidences in Wilkinson's possession, to shew the industry, rancour, perfidy and corruption of his enemies. Can those who respect justice and profess honor, combine with such a band of monsters, to hunt down the officer who defeated their machinations, and has lived, not for himself, but for his country? Forbid it genius of America! Forbid it Heaven!

APPENDIX,

TO VOLUME THE SECOND.

(No. 1.)

*Extract of a letter from Captain Fowler, to General Wilkinson,
dated Lexington, 10th January, 1810.*

COLONEL BURR observed that he intended making a tour through the western country, after his term expired, and thought it was highly probable that he would become a resident in some of the western states, the remainder of his life. That from the general information which he had received, an impression was made on his mind, that he would prefer a residence in the western country, to any other section of the United States. It was then suggested by colonel Lyon, or myself, or both, that Nashville, in the state of Tennessee, would be an eligible situation to settle himself, and offer as a candidate for Congress, in the room of doctor Dickson, who had expressed an intention of withdrawing from public life, as a member of Congress, either at the first or second ensuing election, and expressed an opinion, that should the doctor decline, colonel Burr might probably succeed him in being elected.

(No. 2.)

*Extract of a letter from the honorable M. Lyon, to General
Wilkinson, dated Eddyville, November 19th, 1805.*

B . . R lost the prospect in Tennessee, by not pursuing the road I pointed out for him.

True extract,

N, PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 3.)

Extract of a letter from General Wilkinson, to Governor Harrison, dated St. Louis, September 19th, 1805.

SHALL I say, in return, I have a boon to ask of you of no ordinary import? No; I will not, because the commutation would dishonor my application; but I will demand from your friendship a boon, in its influences and its effects co extensive with the Union; a boon perhaps on which that Union may much depend; a boon which may serve me, serve you, and can disserve neither; a boon which from my knowledge of men, motives and principles, will be acceptable to those whose policies we are bound to support. If you ask what is this important boon which I so earnestly crave, I will say to you, return the bearer to the councils of our country, where his talents and abilities are all important at the present moment. But you continue, how is that to be done? By your fiat. Let Mr. Parke adhere to his profession; convene your Solomons and let them return him—col. B.— to Congress.

If you taste this proposition, speak to him and he will authorise you, if necessary, to purchase an estate for him in your territory.

True extract,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 4.)

Copy of a letter from Colonel Burr, to General Wilkinson, dated Vincennes, September 26, 1805.

I HAVE had no conversation on the subject you mentioned, (though I suspect you wrote of it) but we have gone round about, and there is every evidence of good will in which I have entire belief; there is probably some secret embarrassment of which you and I are ignorant.

Governor H. asked me if you had appointed an attorney general. I told him no. I never take any sort of liberty with any man's secrets but my own. By the bye your attorney general is stark mad. Take the following extract from a recent letter: "C. and D. (naming two highly respectable characters) may do such things. but they are beneath the dignity of ***." The letter is such an one as might be expected from Bonaparte to the emperor of all the Russias. These are thy doings,

Governor H. with whom I am more and more pleased, will tell you of a letter I have received from Dayton. This H. is fit for other things.

God bless you and grant you a safe deliverance from factions and factious men.

(Signed)

A. B.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 5.)

Copy of a letter from Aaron Burr, to General Wilkinson, dated Philadelphia, March 26, 1805.

I MET here Dr. Brown, who, after deliberation, determines to accept of the office of secretary : please to cause it to be announced in the official gazette.

If nothing, now unforeseen, should occur to retard my movements or vary my plans, I shall leave this for Pittsburgh about the 10th April. A letter to Adair would be acceptable.

The project for a convention in this state, and the arrival of a French fleet in the W. Indies, are here almost exclusively the topics of conversation. The former divides and irritates ; the latter astonishes all ranks of people.

Faithfully and affectionately yours.

A. BURR.

N. B. Dr. Brown will not now take his family, but leave them in or near N. Y. till next spring. He will meet you at Fort Pitt, or go on before as you may wish ; the motive which induced him to accept was personal to you.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 6.)

(COPY.)

PHILADELPHIA, *April 10th, 1805.*

YOUR letter of the 8th, received this morning, and it has so far influenced my movements that my departure from this place is delayed until the 21st. I shall be at Pittsburg before the 1st May, but will wait there till that day in

the hope of seeing you. To wait longer would mar my plans and disappoint my companions. I have ordered a boat, but will sell it on the spot if you can furnish me; there is however so much uncertainty and contingency in your march with a family, &c. that I dare not wholly rely on meeting you. Do not again however postpone the day of your departure.

I am always at N. York, though not in person. Things there are going on well enough and fast enough. G. does not understand all the complex mechanism of parties in that state. The printers you mention could never have been mischievous had they not received the countenance of government. God bless them all.

I have such a levee about me of visitors from distant parts, that it is with difficulty I can find an hour, day or night, to write a letter or attend to private concerns.

Dieu te benisse,

A. BURR.

(No. 7.)

Copy of a letter from Colonel Burr, to Gen. Wilkinson, dated Pittsburgh, April 30th, 1805.

FINDING every thing ready and the auspices favourable, I shall sail at 9 this morning. Many thanks for your letter by Sam, full of kind and amiable things.

Send your letters, &c. to Louisville; as I know no person there, address to the care of any of your friends. Yet I entertain hopes of meeting you at that place. Make haste, for I have some things to say which cannot be written.

God bless and speed you.

A. B.

(No. 8.)

Copy of a letter from Colonel Burr, to General Wilkinson, dated Louisville, May 19th, 1805.

MY DEAR SIR,

IT is with extreme regret that I leave the falls without seeing you. But boats from Pittsburg, the 5th May, had not heard of your arrival. Of course you could not then have been there. Besides report says that you are to pass days at Cin. (Cincinnati.)

Before you touch the Kentucky shore, in this vicinity, see and converse with judge Davis, at Jeffersonville. Your friends are apprehensive that something is meditated against your personal convenience. Verb. Sat. Sap.*

The letters which I had expected from you, may now be addressed to Orleans. I hope to see you at St. Louis in the autumn.

God bless you.

(Signed) A. BURR.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 9.)

Copy of a letter from Aaron Burr, to General Wilkinson, dated Ferry at Tennessee, July 30th, 1805.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

PARTING unexpectedly at this place with captain Bissell, who had intended to go on with me to Nashville, I can only say bon jour. I am on my way to Lexington, and hope before the first September to take you by the hand at your palace. Till then, unless some occasion should offer, from Lexington or Nashville, I must reserve the pleasure of detailing the incidents of my three weeks' visit to N. O. You are remembered there with affection and regret. Having heard nothing from secretary Brown, I cannot suppose he is yet with you.

Most affectionately and faithfully yours.

(Signed) A. BURR.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 10.)

BALLSTOWN, 10th October, 1800.

THAT through Biddle, and the other of 29th, came safe to me at Albany, yesterday P. M. just as I was mounting

* This alludes to an intention to arrest general Wilkinson on a false claim of debt.

my horse to ride hither for my daughter, who has been passing a few days with a friend in the neighborhood, while I was attending on public duties at Albany. Having made electors and a Senator, all democratic, the legislature adjourned to meet on the last Tuesday of January, when I shall be again at Albany. To-morrow I move toward N. York and shall remain there for at least two months. From all this, you will know how to address me, and as to the mode of conveyance, I take the mail to be the most secure. Our post offices in N. York and in Albany, are *perfectly* safe. If yours in Washington, or where else you may be, should be safe, you may write fully.

I regret the book for the injury it will do to the reputation of one honest man, and the feelings of another, whose pride will be much wounded.

In Jersey, I suspect will not have a vote. Among the electors, I see some of his *known* political enemies. Not democrats but high going feds. Virginia are pledged as far forth as faith and honor can bind men. You must be deceived as to S. C.

When I receive your cypher and your address, you shall hear from me. Till then adieu.

A. BURR.

Noah Webster, the printer, has, I am told, published a letter against A. H. I have not seen it.

(a. No. 10.)

N. YORK, July 22d, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR box of pacanes is now performing quarantine off Staten Island; at the expiration of forty days I may hope to see it. Whether "pacanes" be animal, vegetable or fossible, no acquaintance of mine, in this city, is sufficiently learned to inform me.

N. York, you know, is in the most direct route to Pittsburg. This circumstance, added to your promise to pass some days here with Mrs. W. lead me yet to hope for the pleasure of seeing you both.

As I never write of politics, and have nothing to say of myself, I may add a word by way of inquiry concerning an object now near you. Within three or four weeks I have drank some gallons of wine, and have made others drink many gallons more to the health of Miss

of Norfolk. Now I should like to hear from so critical a judge of beauty and talents as yourself, how far all this may be due to Miss ; that if you affirm the description which I have received, I may continue to give her as a toast. Having no other commands either political or military to give you at present, I rely on your accuracy and punctuality in the execution of this. Be assured of my attention to your sons. If you will consign them to me at this city, I will see them placed at Princeton or wherever else you may direct. I can with great propriety, and will with much pleasure use my influence with Dr. Smith to interest him particularly in their welfare and advancement. Mrs. W. would not forgive me, if I should advise you to devote one of them to the navy. I am silent therefore on that point ; yet, addressing myself to another, I would say that the navy is the true object of ambition, for the ardent spirits of our country.

Present me respectfully to Mrs. Wilkinson, and be assured of my great attachment and friendship.

A. B.

You will find here, if you hasten, Truxton, W. Hampton and Dr. Eustis.

(No. 11.)

Extract of a letter from Colonel Burr, to General Wilkinson, dated Philadelphia, 5th April, 1805.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter of the 1st was received yesterday about noon, and by midnight, with the aid of C. B. was decyphered. Some words however have finally baffled our joint labors. *Why put such a tax on the pleasure of your correspondence ?*

I shall be at Pittsburgh, before the 25th, and would wait for you if any reliance could be placed on the punctuality of a man who travels with a family. Browne will obey any orders you may give him. Charles Loss, the surveyor, &c. will accompany him or me, not yet settled which. Would John Pintard be of any use to you ?

(No. 13.)

MASSAC, June 9th, 1805.

MY DEAR SIR,

THIS will be delivered to you by colonel Burr who you will know how to estimate. If the persecutions of a

great and honorable man can give title to generous attentions, he has claims to all your civilities and all your services. You cannot oblige me more than by such conduct, and I pledge my life to you it will not be misapplied. To him I refer you for many things improper to letter, and which he will not say to any other. I shall be at St. Louis in two weeks, and if you were there we could open a mine, a commercial one at least. Let me hear from you. Farewell, do well, and believe me always your friend.

JA : WILKINSON.

Daniel Clark, Esq.

(No. 14.)

Copy of a letter from Daniel Clark, to General Wilkinson, dated New Orleans, September 7th, 1805.

DEAR SIR,

MANY absurd and wild reports are circulated here, and have reached the ears of the officers of the late Spanish government, respecting our ex-Vice President. You are spoken of as his right hand man, and even I am now supposed to be of consequence enough to combine with generals and Vice Presidents. At any other time, but the present, I should amuse myself vastly at the folly and fears of those who are affected with these idle tales; but being on the point of setting off for Vera Cruz, on a large mercantile speculation, I feel cursedly hurt at the rumours, and might, in consequence of Spanish jealousy, get into a hobble I could not easily get out of. Entre nous, I believe that Minor of Natchez has a great part in this business in order to make himself of importance. He is in the pay of Spain, and wishes to convince them he is much their friend. This is however matter of suspicion on my part, but the channel through which the information reached me makes me suppose it. Power, whose head is always stuffed with plots, projects, conspiracies, &c. &c. &c. and who sees objects through a mill stone, is going to Natchez next week to unravel the whole of this extraordinary business; and then God have mercy on the culprits, for Spanish ire and indignation will be levelled at them. What in the name of Heaven could give rise to these extravagancies? Were I sufficiently intimate with Mr. Burr, and knew where to direct a line to him, I should take the liberty of writing to him. Perhaps finding Minor in his way, he was endeavor-

ing to extract something from him; he has amused himself at the blockhead's expense, and then Minor has retailed the news to his employers. Inquire of Mr. Burr about this and let me know at my return, which will be in 3 to 4 months. The tale is a horrid one if well told. Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio, with part of Georgia and Carolina, are to be bribed with the plunder of the Spanish countries; west of us to separate from the Union. This is but a part of the business. Heavens what wonderful doings there will be in these days! But how the devil I have been lugged into the conspiracy or what assistance I can be of in it is to me incomprehensible; *vous qui savez tout* can best explain this riddle. Amuse Mr. Burr with an account of it, but let not these great and important objects, these most imperial doings, prevent you from attending to my land business. Recollect that you great men, if you expect to become kings and emperors must have us little men for vassals, and if we have nothing to clothe ourselves with, for we can be clothed with the produce of our lands only, and if Congress take lands for want of formalities, we shall then have no produce, we shall make a very shabby figure at your courts; think of this and practice those formalities that are necessary, that I may have from the produce of my Illinois lands, wherewith to buy a desent court dress when presented at your levee. I hope you will not have Kentuckymen for your masters of ceremonies.

I remain dear sir, very sincerely,

Your humble servant and friend,

(Signed)

DANIEL CLARK.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 15.)

Extracts of a letter from Daniel Clark, to Daniel W. Cox, dated New Orleans, 6th February, 1806.

[Laid before the court of inquiry.]

I HAVE left to C. and R. the task of answering your letter of the 20th, as I am pressed for time, and that will put them on their guard, and inform me of your wish respecting Barclay and his affairs.

..... has a vessel called the belonging to of Philadelphia consigned to him, and this vessel has one of the permissions mentioned in a former letter.

..... has agreed with the captain that he and I shall

avail ourselves of this permission and shall ship a cargo in the vessel, *and the marquis Casa Calvo will give us the necessary certificate.* We propose that the cargo shall amount to \$40,000 to be consigned to me, *and a friend whom I shall name another time is to have $\frac{1}{3}$ interest.* We pay for vessel and permission at the rate of two dollars per barrel freight, for the quantity we ship, and I count on our gaining a cent per cent. on the amount of the adventure. We shall have \$15,000 insured here, and Price and you, when you hear further from and C. and R. can have the rest covered at home, for the voyage out. As for the returns back, I must trust to circumstances to be able to advise you. We have on hand almost all the goods we shall ship, and shall consequently have little or no advances to make, which could interfere with any remittances intended for you, and even in the event of a capture, the amount insured will be a remittance to you. This is but a hint to you for the present; to-morrow when things are more matured I shall write to you. I expect to sail on the 9th, in the William Wright, as advised some time since; the Caroline dropped down the river a day or two ago.

Do me the favor to ship me, and consigned in my absence to captain S. B. Davis, a quarter cask or ten dozen of the best Port wine, which I want for a particular purpose, and for the disposal of which I shall have orders in my absence.

I have written to Dunbar to cancel the mortgage to Mr. Burd,* thinking we cannot now want it, and that in case of my death my family may have my private property unencumbered. If you find it necessary to give a security, we have immense estates in common, and dip or sell them as you may find convenient.

True extracts,

N. PINKNEY, *Capt.*

(No 16.)

(COPY.)

ST. LOUIS, *March 8th, 1806.*

DEAR SIR,

NOT knowing whether you have returned from Mexico or not, I have forbore to address you since the receipt of your land claims, and the tale of a tub of Burr, &c. &c. But, by the bearer Mr. Wilkinson, I think proper to advise you, that your claims have been all registered.

* Clark's Natchez estates were mortgaged to Mr. Burd for about \$72,000.

Though they have not been acted upon by the commissioners, yet I have collected from two of the board, that one only of them is indisputable, I think for five thousand acres, and granted in your own name ; the rest stand in need of explanations and testimony. I do not comprehend, as yet, the particulars, but you may rest assured of my attentions, and that nothing shall be left undone to support your rights.

By the next conveyance you shall be more particularly informed, as I am to bring forward those claims in a few days, in order to ascertain the sentiments of the board. As I do not know whether this will find you in New Orleans or not, I must not enlarge, but will refer you to my nephew for the news of this territory, should he find you at home.

What think you of the purchase of the Floridas by the United States? "Entre nous," I verily believe it is done. Something of great importance has been done in conclave, and that something is to perpetuate our peace with Spain ; again "entre nous ;" I write in haste, and am with much friendship,

Yours.

JA: WILKINSON.

D. Clark, Esquire.

(No. 17.)

Extract of a letter from Gen. James Wilkinson, to the Honble. Robert Smith, Sec. of the Navy, dated New Orleans.

I DECLARE most sacredly colonel Burr never proposed any illicit project to me, until I received his letter of the 24th July by Swartwout. I did believe that his journey to Tennessee and New Orleans, was to secure his return to Congress for that state or this territory. I had no idea of any other project, and these I endeavoured to promote, because I knew how to estimate his talents, and did not wish them lost to his country. At St. Louis he said to me "the imbecility of the government will dissolve the Union;" at which I laughed, and he replied "why the whole western country is ripe for a separation:" to which I answered "my friend, if you have travelled with as little advantage in other respects, you would have done well to have remained in Philadelphia or Washington, for never was any man more deceived in point of fact." He said no more. The evening before he left St. Louis, he spoke to me of some splendid enterprize and asked me if I would take a hand, but neither hinted at time or place, and spoke expressly with reference to the authority of government ; nay, he mentioned the name of a minister to me and asked

if orders from him would satisfy me ; to which I replied, that an order from any gentleman of the administration was always considered as from the President. He observed it was unnecessary to go into the details of a remote project ; “ and I answered I had no desire to hear any ; ” we parted. I rather considered his views to be chimerical, but determined to fathom them if possible. I do not precisely recollect whether it was then I gave you a hint that he was about something, or whether I had received an extraordinary, insidious and equivocal letter from him at Washington before I did it.

DANIEL HUGHES, captain in the 1st regiment of infantry, on his oath declares, that he served with general Wilkinson as an aid de-camp from the month of June, 1806, to the month of March, 1807. That soon after colonel Burr's visit to St. Louis, in the month of September, 1805, general Wilkinson wrote a letter to honorable Robert Smith, then secretary of the navy, which he put into the hands of this deponent and which this deponent did read ; and he well remembers that the said letter did contain the following expression, or words of the same import : “ Burr is about something, but whether internal or external I cannot discover : I think you should keep an eye to him.” The deponent further declares. that he parted with general Wilkinson in March, 1807, and that he did not see him again until the month of April, 1808 ; that he never held conversation with the general on the subject of the letter herein referred to, until the evening of 2d instant, when he expressed to him his wonder that he should never have published a copy of that letter : the general appeared surprised at this observation, and said to the deponent that he did not recollect he had shewn it to him. Deponent further says, that he has mentioned this letter to several persons, and among them recollects James Berney of Kentucky. And the deponent further declares. that living with general Wilkinson and enjoying his confidence, he had opportunities of seeing his papers and witnessing his conduct ; that he never knew of an action or heard an expression from him, unworthy the soldier, the patriot or the man of honor ; the deponent further declares, that the extract of the letter hereunto prefixed to the honorable Robert Smith, was written by general Wilkinson, in New Orleans, pending the scenes of Burr's conspiracy, and was copied by this deponent, but that the copy is without date ; and further the deponent saith not.

DANIEL HUGHES, *Capt. U. S. Infantry.*

ON this 4th day of September, 1810, before the subscriber a justice of the peace, for Washington county, in the District of Columbia, appeared Daniel Hughes, and

made oath in due form of law, that the facts stated in the above and foregoing paper or instrument of writing, are true to the best of his knowledge.

DANIEL RAPINE.

(No. 18.)

From Burr to General Wilkinson, December 12th, 1805.

ABOUT the last of October, our cabinet was seriously disposed for warfare with the Spanish ; but more recent accounts of the increasing and alarming aggression and arrogance of the British, and some courteous words from the French have banished every such intention. In case of such warfare, Lee would have been commander in chief. Truth I assure you. He must you know come from Virginia. The utmost now intended is that sort of marine piracy which we had with the French under the former administration.

Burr passed a week at Washington, and has been here ten days. Reception as usual. He has discovered nothing which excites doubt of the confirmation of Wilkinson's appointment. Secretary of the navy apprehended difficulty, military establishment increase nor diminish.

On the subject of a certain speculation, it is not deemed material to write till the whole can be communicated. The circumstance referred to in a letter from Ohio, remains in suspense ; the auspices however are favorable, and it is believed that Wilkinson will give audience to a delegation composed of Adair and Dayton, in February. Can 25, boats be had in your vicinity to move at some hours notice.

Philadelphia, December 12th.

Truly decyphered,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 19.)

NATCHITOCHEs, *October 21st. 1806*

SIR,

I FIND from a public print, lately established in Kentucky, that the cause of Easton, Lucas, Hammond, Carr and other malcontents of Louisiana, has received a powerful auxiliary in the person of Mr. John Wood ; and that (like the most illustrious characters of our country) I have been loaded with obloquy and slandered with a degree of vir-

ulence and indecency, surpassing all example, for the sole motive of gratifying the envy, hatred and malice of the Marshall family; I have at times been fearful your confidence might be shaken, by the boldness of the vile calumnies which have been levelled at me: But the reflection that I had not only enjoyed but had merited the confidence of the several administrations under whom I have served, and the consciousness that the wealth and power of the wide world, could not for a moment divert my course from the path of honor, dissipated my apprehensions and determined me, not to descend to the task of refuting by living testimony and authentic documents, every imputation charged against me from the most frivolous to the most foul: I therefore contented myself by desiring my attorney to bring an action of slander against the printers, in order to test their authorities in a court of justice; but having placed my hands by accident on the originals from which the enclosed copies have been taken, I have ventured to transmit them to you by this conveyance, and regret deeply that I cannot add to them the numerous public and private testimonials of honor and applause, received from general Washington and his secretary of war, general Knox; but those papers are left at Fort Adams.

I am vain enough to think these testimonies were not necessary either to perpetuate or to justify the confidence you have reposed in me but they may serve, should the thread of my life be unseasonably cut, to silence the misrepresentations of my enemies and to gratify the feelings of my friends. In the mean time pardon I beseech you the honest pride which impels me to bare my bosom to you. My ultimate views are limited to the acquisition of an honorable fame. My attachments to life hang by the precarious existence of an adored wife. I have ever contemned the sordid interests of the world, and estimate property by its immediate utility only. And the highest ambition of my soul is, on a proper occasion, and in good company, to yield my last breath to the service of my country. A frail character but a just one.

To you I owe more than I will express, lest I should be suspected of adulation which I detest; suffice it that I shall serve our country with zeal and integrity, and that your trust can never be disgraced,

By Sir, your faithful and obliged soldier and servant,
(Signed) JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson, President of the U. S.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 20.)

Copy of a letter from General Dayton to General Wilkinson, written in cypher, except those parts printed in Italics. This cypher was designed by General Dayton, and founded on the hieroglyphics known to General Wilkinson and Colonel Burr.

July 24th, 1806.

IT is now well ascertained that you are to be displaced in next session. Jefferson will affect to yield reluctantly to the public sentiment, but yield he will; prepare yourself therefore for it: you know the rest.

You are not a man to despair, or even despond, especially when such prospects offer in another quarter. Are you ready? Are your numerous associates ready? Wealth and glory, Louisiana and Mexico. *I shall have time to receive a letter from you before I set out for Ohio—OHIO. Address one to me here, and another to me in Cincinnati. Receive and treat my nephew affectionately, as you would receive your friend,*

DAYTON.

July 16th, 1807.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

AS you are said to have removed your head quarters down the river, and there is a report that the Spaniards intercept our mails which pass necessarily through the territory occupied by them, in order to reach you, I think proper to address you in cypher, that the contents may be concealed from the Dons, if they make so free as to open the letter. Take the following for the ketch word or check word (and you may very readily decypher the figures.) Viz. in your own hieroglyphic [.]; but in your own alphabet thus—[Hieroglyphics.]

V C — O — I A

Every thing and even Heaven itself, appears to have conspired to prepare the train for a grand explosion;—are you also ready? For I know you flinch not when a great object is in view. Your present is more favorable than your late position, and as you can retain it without suspicion or alarm, you ought by no means to retire from it until your friends join you in December, somewhere on the river Mississippi. Under the auspices of Burr and Wilkinson I shall be happy to engage, and when the time arrives you will find me near you.

Write, and inform me by first mail, what may be expected from you and your associates. In an enterprize of such moment, considerations even stronger than those of

affection, impel me to desire your cordial co-operation and active support.

DAYTON.

Wealth and honor.	}	Wilkinson and Burr.
Adieu.		
Courage and union.		

Let me hear from you by mail, as well as by the first good private conveyance, and believe me, with the best wishes for your prosperity and happiness, most truly,

Your friend and servant,

JONA. DAYTON.

If you write in cypher }	[Hieroglyphics.]
use the same word, viz. }	V \curvearrowright — O — I Δ
	f r a n c e

(No. 21.)

PHILADELPHIA, 6th January, 1806.

AT the President's table, on my way hither, in November, some one asked me the condition of the new road from the Bayou Pirre to Nashville. I replied, as was the truth, that I had seen no trace of a road till after passing the Chickasaw village; that from the military station near the Tennessee to Nashville, a road had been opened, but was overgrown with bushes and little used, and that the road laid down on Bradley's map existed no where else; all which I presumed was well known.

One, professing to be your friend, whispered to me, soon afterwards, that this conversation was calculated to do you injury, in what way he did not explain, nor did I inquire; but on the following day, I went to the President and to Dearborn, and learnt from them both, separately, that there was nothing new in the information, and I could not perceive that any inference unfriendly to you was drawn from the fact, however obtained. If you have ever made any report on the subject or are otherwise implicated, I was, and still am, ignorant, and I should not have thought the circumstance worthy of notice, if it were not for the apprehension that some malevolent rascal might make bad use of it. Such an one I know.

Your letter of November, which came I believe through J. Smith, has been received and *answered*. Your friend suspects, without reason, the person named in his letter to you. I love the society of that person, but surely I could never be guilty of the folly of confiding to one of his levity, any thing which I wished not to be repeated. Pray do not disturb yourself with such nonsense. You will know long be-

fore this can reach you, that we are to have no Spanish war except in ink and words. It is undoubtedly best so, for we are in poor condition to go to war even with Spain. We might, to be sure, do them a temporary mischief; but what our position would be if peace were suddenly concluded in Europe, you can well conceive. Besides what might be apprehended from France, Great Britain is just now making alarming and systematic encroachments on our commerce.

Tell Browne that I shall write him from Washington, where I shall be in a few days. You shall then also hear further from yours,

A. BURR.

True copy,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 22.)

THE execution of our project is postponed till December; want of water in Ohio rendered movement that way impracticable. Other reasons rendered delay expedient. The association is enlarged and comprises all that Wilkinson could wish. Confidence limited to a few.

Though this delay is irksome, it will enable us to move with more certainty and dignity.

Burr will be throughout the United States this summer. Administration is damned, which Randolph aids. Burr wrote you a long letter last December, replying to a short one deemed very silly. *Nothing has been heard from brigadier since October.* Is *Busion et Porter right?

Address Burr at Washington. 16 April, '06.

Truly decyphered,

N. PINKNEY, *Captain.*

(No. 23. a.)

(EXTRACT.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, *March 14th, 1806.*

SIR,

FROM existing circumstances, the reinforcement of our posts on the Lower Mississippi, is considered a proper measure. You will therefore please to have the necessary arrangements made for the removal of the troops in

* Meaning, it is presumed, colonel Cushing and major Porter.

your neighborhood, excepting one full company, as early as circumstances will permit, at all events by the last of April next. They will descend the river to Fort Adams ; at which post or in its vicinity, they will take up their quarters until further orders.

The company which will remain in Louisiana territory, you will probably think proper to post at the cantonment on the Missouri, in the vicinity of the factory.

You will undoubtedly consider, a due attention to the organization and discipline of the militia within your government as highly important ; and you will retain such arms and artillery, as can with propriety, be spared by the troops on their departure.

I presume that you have on hand, boats sufficient for the troops to descend the river ; and I trust there will be no delay in their movement ; they should take with them, the whole of the tents in that quarter, with their baggage.

I am, very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. DEARBORN.

General James Wilkinson.

(No. 23. b.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, *March 18th, 1806.*

SIR,

BY late advices from Natchitoches, it appears that the Dons are making movements, which render the reinforcement of that post necessary, and as early as possible. You will please therefore to direct colonel Cushing, with three companies and two field pieces with ammunition and other necessary articles, to proceed without delay to Natchitoches, without making any unnecessary tarry at Fort Adams. The remainder of the troops in your neighborhood, excepting one full company of artillery, as directed in my letter of the 14th instant will, as soon as possible, after the movement of colonel Cushing, descend the river for Fort Adams, under the command of lieutenant colonel Kingsbury.

Colonel Cushing should take with him, as many tents and tools of all kinds, as can be spared, for his command.

I am very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. DEARBORN.

General James Wilkinson.

(No. 24.)

ST. LOUIS, May 6th, 1806.

SIR,

YOU are to embark to-morrow, and will sail early the next morning with Lockwood's and Strong's company for Fort Adams and on arriving there, you are to add Campbell's company to your detachment, and must proceed without a moment's unnecessary delay up Red river to Natchitoches, where you are to take the command.

The point of your destination being deemed at present a critical one, it is desirable your companies should be kept complete to the establishment, and for this purpose you are to make such disposition of the recruits ordered from Tennessee or elsewhere, as may be found necessary.

Your remote position from the posts east of the Mississippi, renders it convenient and necessary that they should, as heretofore, report directly to, and receive orders from, head quarters; but the commandants are to report to you monthly, and will be liable to your orders as senior officer of the district, whenever the public service may require the interposition of your authority, which should be made with due caution, to avoid clashing with the arrangements which may issue from head quarters.

The posts, west of the Mississippi, are subject to your immediate command, and are to be governed accordingly. You are to appoint general courts martial within the limits of your district, and are to decide on all sentences which may not affect a commissioned officer, agreeably to the rules and articles of war.

At the distance which separates us, it would be vain and presumptuous to prescribe precise rules for your conduct in command, where the occurrences of incidents and change of circumstances may be so unexpected and variable as to baffle anticipation and to render positive orders destructive to the interests of the country. You are therefore to meet the public service with a sound discretion, and will be held responsible for events. The trust is a high and important one, but it is with singular pleasure I can observe, that my long experience of your judgment and capacity, leaves no doubts on my mind, that the result will justify the public confidence, and prove honorable to your name and profession.

I will therefore submit one observation only to your consideration, it is that you should not fail to employ the force confided to your command, wherever it may be found most necessary, to protect or defend the rights and interests of our country, within the sphere of your authority.

With the warmest wishes for your fame and happiness,

I am Sir, your faithful friend, and obedient servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

Col. Thomas H. Cushing, 2d. Reg. infantry.

(No. 25.)

To Col. Cushing, St. Louis, May 8th, 1806, 6 o'clock, A. M.

SIR,

THE INFORMATION which I received yesterday from major Porter, induces me to request of you to accelerate your descent of the Mississippi by every practicable means. In the present state of the water, with your equipments, I have little doubt you may reach Fort Adams on the 20th instant.

On arriving there, the information you may receive will determine your course of conduct. Should the Spaniards have resumed their position east of the Sabine, or assumed a menacing aspect at Nacagdoches, you must add to your command every man at Fort Adams, except a sufficient guard for the preservation of the works and buildings; leaving orders for lieutenant colonel Kingsbury to follow you without a moment's delay, who can very conveniently fall down to the mouth of Red river, and there wait the return of a sufficient number of your barges, which may be ordered down the Red river, so soon as you reach the high grounds; from whence it may be expedient for you to march the whole of the troops, excepting the boats' crews.

I hope major Porter may have taken the precaution to transmit to the executive, a copy of the information which he has forwarded me; in which case, you will not be long without decisive orders for your government: in the mean time, *as war is not only opposite to the genius and disposition of our country, but also to its substantial interests and happiness, the sword must not be drawn but in the last extremity, to punish insult, to resist invasion or repel an attack.*

You are, therefore, should appearances justify it, to call to your aid all the troops which can be safely spared from the other posts, and must omit no pains nor exertion in preparing both officers and men for offensive operations which are not, however, to be commenced but on the explicit orders of government, unless under the circumstances before stipulated.

The order which you will find in the hands of major Porter, might perhaps justify you in pushing beyond the Sabine river, any advanced posts which the enemy may have established; but, as it appears from the public prints, that a pacific negotiation has ensued those orders, I think we should not strain their construction, *to favor the effusion of blood, and involve our country in the certain calamities, and the uncertain events of war.*

Be yourself prepared for combat ; learn with all possible precision the position, force and disposition of your antagonist, and should a conflict ensue, having exhorted your men, and sworn your officers in their presence, to fall or conquer, make your onset with the bayonet, and your own glory and the honor of our arms will be insured.

I am, &c. &c.

JA. WILKINSON.

(No. 26.)

Extract of a letter from General Wilkinson, to the Secretary of War, dated St. Louis, April 11th, 1806.

SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter of the 14th ultimo, on the evening, of the 11th instant, too late to reply to it by the return mail.

Without previous expectation, notice or preparation, it will require great expedition to break up the cantonment and to embark the troops, baggage and stores, destined to Fort Adams, in two weeks, the casualties of weather considered ; yet nothing shall be left undone which exertion can effect, and you may calculate on the detachment reaching its destination by the first of June, if not earlier. My greatest obstacle is the pay of the troops, due since the 1st of January ; and to relieve this difficulty, I shall despatch an express after the paymaster, to hasten his return or to know what may be expected from him ; and by the same conveyance, I transmit this letter. If arrangements have been made to pay the troops here, they should be paid before their departure, not only for their accommodation, but to prevent further delay, to preserve the order of the pay office, and avoid perplexity and hazard in the transfer of the money from hand to hand : Yet neither this nor any other consideration shall interfere with the letter of your order.

I apprized you in a former letter, that the troops would want tents for any movement, those here being generally worn out : A quantity should therefore be hastened down the Ohio, and to forward this end, I have written to the military agent at Pittsburgh ; but I fear we have none there, and at any rate, the interposition of your authority may be necessary.

(No. 27.)

St. Louis, *April* 25, 1806.

SIR,

I HAVE just received your letters of the 18th and 19th ultimo, with a duplicate of that of the 14th, which had been previously answered, by an express sent after the pay-master, and to governor Harrison, respecting the Osage prisoners.

My orders under cover, will best exhibit the result of your commands, of the 14th ultimo; but your subsequent instructions for the immediate reinforcement of the post at Natchitoches, will retard the movement three or four days longer; because although I had provided suitable craft to transport the troops down the Mississippi to Fort Adams without purchase, the same craft will not serve for the ascent of Red river, and therefore I shall be obliged to purchase a couple of barges, in addition to those we have; but these boats may be either sold to advantage, or laid up in safety at Natchitoches, for any prompt movement by water, which events may render necessary.

Colonel Cushing will take with him two French four pounders and a five inch howitzer, which with major Porter's little train, will find full employ for the Dons, should they dare take the field, of which I have no idea at present; for they must be joined by the Gauls before they can look us in the face.

You have under cover a copy of major Porter's letter to me of the 4th ultimo, which does not give his neighbors a very belligerent attitude. Although at peace, I conceive existing circumstances render those visits exceptionable; I shall therefore order colonel Cushing to discourage them, and when they are made, to return the civility at Nacagdoches a few days after, on any feigned pretext to be suggested for the occasion, by an officer of acute and correct observation. Major Porter's report of the state of his command is flattering, and the aspect will not be impaired by the reinforcement of colonel Cushing and his detachment, who ought to reach the point of his destination before the 20th of June.

The removal of the troops has excited strong emotions here, and many apprehensions are expressed in which I do not thoroughly participate; yet considering the Indian character and prejudice in this quarter, it is impossible clearly to anticipate results, and it is certain a body of troops would constitute our best security at this remote point. At present tranquillity reigns, and I shall leave nothing undone in my power, to preserve it.

I understand I have been charged with an improper interference, in the conduct of the commissioners; this may be considered an appendix to the volume of calumnies heretofore levelled at me, and I ask only, what I confidently expect, an audit before condemnation; in the mean time, I pray you to submit to the President for his satisfaction, the enclosed declaration of the gentlemen who have been inculpated with me.

I am with perfect respect, sir,

Your most obedient servant.

JA : WILKINSON.

The Hon. H. Dearborn, Sec. of War.

(No. 28.)

HEAD QUARTERS,

ST. LOUIS, *July 11th, 1805.*

SIR,

SHOULD any officer of Spain approach your post, you are not to forbid him the hospitality of the country, but you should be extremely cautious how you admit him to examine your works or inspect your garrison; and you are on no pretence to admit an armed party of foreign troops, to pass the Adays, as such movements are repugnant to the practices of nations in strictest amity, and amount to a violation of territory.

The late visit of the bishop from Mexico, was an outrage on propriety, and should not have been permitted.

Respectfully I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JA : WILKINSON.

*To MAJOR M. PORTER,
Commanding Natchitoches.*

(No. 29.)

ST. LOUIS, *March 29th, 1806.*

SIR,

I HAVE just received your despatch of the 6th ultimo, those which it preceded having come safe to hand.

Viewing your situation to be somewhat critical, I think proper to authorise you, should hostilities commence with your neighbors, to order the company from the Appaloussa and the infantry from Fort Adams to your succour, taking

care to apprize colonel Freeman of this authority and of your motives.

I shall write you fully in a few days, by water, and in the mean time, I am with respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

Major M. Porter.

(No. 30.)

ST. LOUIS, April 19th, 1806.

DEAR MAJOR,

AS the secretary of war has given you orders directly, I deem it improper for me to interfere with your command, unless some extraordinary occurrence should render my interposition indispensable; you must therefore respect the orders you have heretofore received; will attend strictly to the police and discipline of men and officers, and put the means furnished you to the best use.

I regret extremely any difference among your officers, because it embitters the happiness of all, and destroys that harmony which constitutes the soul of service; you should never take part in the controversies of your subordinates; because, as the common guardian of the whole, you should preserve an unbiased mind, the better to assure a clear and unprejudiced judgment. Such a deportment in a commanding officer, will insure the respect and engage the love of all who depend on him. *I am opposed utterly to personal controversies and to private combat*; but when gentlemen will differ and hold out obstinately, the shortest, I have always found the best mode of adjustment; and after much experience, I have determined never to interfere except in very extraordinary cases.

Notwithstanding the aspect of things when you wrote me on the 8th of March, I think we shall have no war; no augmentation of army or navy; no classification of militia; *negotiation is always cheapest and safest, and best suits the genius and solid interests of a republic.* Colonel Cushing will send you the late promotions and appointments, and the next news you may hear of him, will either be his presence with you, or his arrival at Fort Adams, with 400 or 500 men, and lieutenant colonel Kingsbury.

Farewell dear major, keep a good look out, and justify what I have said, when I told the President, *you would do honor to any service in the world.*

God bless you.

JA: WILKINSON.

Major Porter.

(No. 31.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, *November 20, 1805.**Commanding officer at Natchitoches,*

SIR,

BY direction of the President of the United States, you will, without delay, apply to the Spanish commandant at Nacogdoches, and request an assurance from him that there shall be no further inroads nor acts of violence on their part, committed on this side of the Sabine river. If he refuses, or fails to observe his engagement, you will be on the alert for the protection of our citizens pursuing their lawful concerns westward of the Mississippi.

You will from time to time send patrols through the country eastward of the Sabine river, (which you are to consider as in our actual possession) and especially when armed men, not under the authority of the United States, have entered, or are about to enter the same; or when it is necessary to repel invasion, to pursue and arrest the invaders, or to protect the persons or property of our citizens, or those under our protection. You will, if possible, arrest all aggressors; and avoid the spilling of blood, but when these orders cannot be otherwise executed.

Persons arrested, if Spanish subjects, may be delivered to the commandant of Nacogdoches, if he gives satisfactory assurance of punishment; or if that be found incompetent, you will deal with them as you shall be advised by the governor of the territory of Orleans.

In patrolling the country about Bayou Pierre, (which settlement is within our possessions, although not yet assumed) you are not to disturb or enter that settlement, unless an aggression renders it necessary to take possession of it, and to send the Spanish guard to Nacogdoches. And if the commandant of Nacogdoches shall engage, as proposed in the first instance, to prevent aggressions, then you are not to consider any peaceable intercourse between Nacogdoches and Bayou Pierre as an aggression; but if the engagement is denied in the first instance, you will prevent all intercourse between those places.

I am, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) HENRY DEARBORN.

P. S. I will thank you to state as precisely as is practicable, the distance by land and by water, between the settlement at Bayou Pierre and Natchitoches.

Every reasonable measure, short of actual force, ought to be pursued on your part, to induce the commanding officer

at Nacogdoches to cause restitution to be made of the property taken from the citizens or traders of the United States by the soldiers or subjects of Spain.

H. D.

(No. 32.)

Copy of a letter from Major M. Porter, to the Secretary of War, dated Nachitoches, 8th February, 1806.

SIR,

YOUR letter of the 20th of November was received on the 24th ultimo, and the requests therein mentioned, were, without loss of time, forwarded to the commandant of Nacogdoches, from whom I received, on the 4th instant, an answer, in which he refuses to give the assurance required.

Deeming this reply decisive, I immediately detached captain Turner with sixty men, to remove a party of Spaniards that had a few days before passed and taken post on this side the Adies, and to patrol the country between this post and the river Sabine. The former he easily accomplished, and is now performing the latter.

The reports of preparations making by our Spanish neighbors for war, are various ; but generally agree that considerable numbers of troops are progressing from the interior to the eastward ; that near three hundred of them were a few weeks since at the great crossing of the Trinity, where there were near two hundred beeves, five hundred horses, and a considerable magazine of flour.

That they have ten guns now mounting at Nacogdoches, where most of them have been lately received ; and that immediately after lieutenant Piatt, the bearer of my letter to the commandant of Nacogdoches, left that place on his return, a Spanish officer was dispatched to Bayou aux Pierres, to impress on the minds of the inhabitants of that settlement, the allegiance that they owed to his Catholic Majesty ; ordered them to join his standard whenever required, and informed them that the Red River would be the boundary line between the Spanish country and the United States.

In contrasting these preparations and advantages with our situation, I beg leave to observe, that I am posted here with six guns badly mounted ; not two hundred men fit for duty, with only one month's flour ; in a small stockade, which, from its situation near much higher grounds, is barely tenable against musketry ; and what is most to be regretted, is the growing disaffection of the French inhabitants in this quarter, of whom I am induced to believe nineteen out of twenty

would prefer to live under the government of Spain to that of the United States. This revolution in the minds of our French citizens, I trust may be imputed to the intrigues of the Marquis of Casa Calva, who lately passed through this country, where he openly declared, that the time was not far distant, when all the country west of Red River would revert to Spain.

It will be my duty and inclination to patrol and protect our citizens between this post and the Sabine, as often as may be necessary and practicable.

Herewith enclosed, are several documents explanatory of the subjects on which I have addressed you ; and which I, with due deference, submit to your consideration.

I am this moment informed, that Captain Turner has safely deposited his charge on the west bank of the Sabine, and is now on his return to this post.

I have the honor, &c.

(Signed)

M. PORTER,

Major Artillerists.

The hon. Henry Dearborn.

(No. 33.)

NATCHITOCHES, 25th January, 1806.

SIR,

I HAVE it in command from my government, without delay to request from you, as commandant of Nacogdoches, assurances that there shall be no further inroads nor acts of violence committed by the subjects of Spain on this side of the Sabine river, which is considered within the territory of the United States.

In obedience to these commands, I request assurances from you, that no further acts of violence be committed by your people on our citizens, and that the troops of Spain now at any place east of the Sabine, be immediately withdrawn, and not be again permitted to take post, or patrol on the east side of that river. As a refusal to comply with this request may sensibly affect our different nations, I trust nothing on your part will be wanting to establish that harmony so essential to the interests and happiness of both. Under this impression, I have the honor, &c.

(Signed)

M. PORTER, *Major Artillerists,*

Commanding at Natchitoches.

Captain Don Sebastiano Rodriguez.

P. S. A reply is requested as early as circumstances will permit.

(No. 34.)

NACOGDOCHES, *January 30th, 1806.*

SIR,

BY the letter received from you by lieutenant Piatt, I understand that the United States intend to violate the territory of his Catholic majesty, under the pretence that his troops should evacuate the points they now occupy within our own proper limits. No encroachment has been intended, nor violence of any kind offered to the citizens of the Republic, as you say, but only to prevent the introduction of contraband goods, or the exportation of horses.

The order or intimation you have communicated to me from your government, is so entirely opposed to the order I hold from mine, that you cannot consider it extraordinary, should I not accede to it at the expense of my duty. I have instructed the patrolle to reconnoitre to the Arroyo Honda ; in the mean time, I have addressed my general, who will order what he deems necessary. May the Lord preserve your life many years.

I kiss your hands, my dear sir,

(Signed)

SEBASTIAN RODRIGUEZ.

Major M. Porter, commanding Natchitoches.

(No. 35.)

NATCHITOCHEs, *1st February, 1806.*

SIR,

YOU are immediately to proceed with the detachment now under your command, to the neighborhood of Adies ; where, should you fall in with a stationary party of armed Spaniards, you will command them, or any other armed party of foreigners which you may discover, to withdraw beyond the Sabine river. In case of their refusing to comply, you are to treat them agreeably to the orders of the secretary of war, (a certified extract of which accompanies these instructions) as far as relates to the pursuit, capture and detention of invaders or aggressors ; and the avoiding the spilling of blood, but when these orders cannot be otherwise executed. You are to patrolle, if practicable, the country between this and the Sabine : be on your guard against surprise, and communicate to me by express, from time to time, any occurrence worthy of note.

(Signed)

M. PORTER,

*Major artilleryists, commanding.**Captain Edward D. Turner, 2d regiment infantry.*

(No. 36.)

ADIES, February 6, 1806.

SIR,

AFTER a tedious march, we arrived in front of the Spanish post yesterday morning, about half past eleven o'clock ; found the Dons in some confusion, in consequence of their patrol having discovered us an hour before, (owing to our pilot bringing us in sight of the road.) I took a position which would have carried their camp if there had been ten times their number, which was *twenty*. They saddled, mounted, and formed ; at the Bayou le Glese, their patrol or picket halted our van-guard, and demanded the reason we were violating or invading his majesty's territory ? I answered, that we did not acknowledge it his majesty's territory, and requested him to withdraw with his guard inside his camp, where I would presently be, and inform his officer of my business ; he implicitly obeyed. Upon my arrival at my position, I sent Mr. Duforest to tell the officer I wished a conference. Mr. Duforest was informed, in consequence of some information the corporal of the advanced guard had given, the officer had gone down the road to meet me. I waited some time his return, but not seeing him, I suspected he had purposely put himself out of the way to gain time ; I therefore, after sending another message to the camp, formed my men, and marched through a thicket within forty yards, where I halted, and told the non-commissioned officer commanding, that I should wait fifteen minutes for his officer, provided he made no movements in the interim. The officer soon after appeared, when I delivered him my commands. He readily agreed to abandon his position, but said he could go no further than a creek *San Jose*. After a good deal of altercation, he consented to move to the other side of the Sabine, and I gave him three hours to prepare to march ; he begged I would not insist upon his crossing the Sabine within five days ; alleging, that in the miserable condition of his horses, it would be impossible without losing them, and requested he might be allowed to look up some that were missing. I replied, that after reaching the other side of the Sabine, he might send in two or three of his men without arms to hunt them, and that he must get them as soon as possible. He replied he would, but it would necessarily take him four or five days.

This morning I commenced my march for *La Naja*, and fell in with him in three miles. I signified my surprise at his being no further, and he made the old excuse of the impossibility of his horses to travel faster ; and observed he had been detained in trying to find some of his horses, two of

which he had got, and four were yet missing. Not thinking it proper to rely exactly upon his word, after again falling in with him, I made him subscribe to the enclosed terms, (which I hope may meet your approbation) and shall follow his footsteps till my provisions are out.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)

E. D. TURNER.

Major Moses Porter.

(No. 36. a.)

At the Adies, February 6th, 1806.

I, JOSEPH MARIA GONZALES, ensign commandant of his most Catholic majesty's troops on this side of the river *Sabinas*,

Hereby have agreed with captain Edward Turner, captain in the United States army, to return all said troops of his Catholic majesty to the other side of the said river *Sabinas*, as soon as my horses will permit it; or in five days, or at furthest six; and to take my march this day. And I also oblige myself not to send any patrols on this side of the river *Sabinas*.

(Signed) Ensign JOSEPH MARIA GONZALES.

Witness,

(Signed) *John V. Duforest*

(No. 37.)

BÆZAR, March 7, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

FROM the mutual good correspondence which happily subsists between his Catholic majesty and the United States of America, which I am bound to preserve, (according to the orders which I hold from the captain general on whom I depend) I infer that resistance might have been made to your removal of the small advanced parties of the troop of Nacogdoches, stationed at places near the post under your command, and the circumstance of the troops under your jurisdiction having entered our territories, (which they have already evacuated) being foreign to the will and understanding of our governments, my orders being positive not to vary in any manner my conduct concerning limits, until they should be marked out on the part of both powers;

it becomes my duty to give you notice, that I have ordered the commandant of Nacogdoches to send back his troops to the places which they formerly occupied; and that he should take care not to change the system of harmony so much recommended by the authority to which I am subjected, concerning the citizens of the United States. I hope at the same time, that you may give orders that similar conduct be observed on your part, and that your troops may not encroach on this side of the rivulet Ondo, known to make part of this province. Should your conduct disappoint my expectations, and hostilities ensue between our troops, you will be held responsible to your government for the consequences.

In entering upon these details, I comply with the orders of the captain general, on whom I depend. With this motive, I have the particular honor of offering to you my consideration and respect, and to ask of God, that he may preserve your life many years.

(Signed) ANTONIO CORDERO.

Major Porter, commanding Natchitoches.

(No. 38.)

NATCHITOCHES, 20th March, 1806.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor herewith to transmit under cover, a letter from the governor of the Spanish province of Texas, with a copy of mine in reply; likewise, a copy of my letter of this day to general Wilkinson: all of which I submit to your consideration.

I am very respectfully, &c.

(Signed) M. PORTER,

Major Artillerists, commanding.

The hon. Henry Dearborn.

(No. 39.)

NATCHITOCHES, 14th March, 1806.

SIR,

I AM this day honored with the reception of your excellency's letter of the 7th of March last, handed by lieutenant Guadiana.

Not being authorised to enter into a discussion of the subjects on which your excellency is pleased to address me in

this letter, I shall, without delay, transmit it to the commander in chief, general Wilkinson, for the information of my government.

Wishing you a long and happy life, I have the honor to be &c.

(Signed) MOSES PORTER, *Major Artillerists,*
Commanding Natchitoches.

His excellency, Governor Don Antonio Corder o.

(No. 40.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, *March 19th, 1806.*

Major Moses Porter,

SIR,

YOUR letter of the 8th ultimo has been duly received. The measures taken for removing the Spanish party from the Adies were correct. I know you will be on the alert, and will not suffer any improper encroachments with impunity.

Although there exists no disposition on the part of the United States to commit any hostilities on any of the Spanish posts or troops, we cannot admit them to establish any post to the eastward of the river Sabine. And should any opportunity present itself, you may assure the Spanish officer that we have no intention of commencing war on Spain, or on any of its subjects ; but that while negotiations are pending, we shall not permit their taking new positions on this side of that river : and that our reinforcements are not intended for any other service but that of securing the territory actually surrendered to us, which we consider as extending to the Sabine, excepting the small post of Bayou Pierre, which ought to have been given up with Natchitoches ; but no additional force ought to be allowed to cross that river.

You may assure the inhabitants, that, notwithstanding any thing the Marquis Cassa Calvo, or any other person may say to the contrary, the United States will never abandon, by treaty or otherwise, one inch of the territory they possess.

It is probable that the boundaries of Louisiana will soon be amicably adjusted by negotiation. But should the officers of Spain attempt, by force, to decide the question of boundaries, they may rest assured that they have much to fear, but nothing to hope from such an attempt. For, if by any stratagem they should gain any temporary advantage, the force of the United States will not fail of being effectually exerted for doing ourselves ample justice. I am, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) HENRY DEARBORN.

(No. 41.)

NATCHITOCHES, 29th January, 1806.

SIR,

IN addressing you on the concerns of my command, I submit to your perusal the following information of the late conduct of our Spanish neighbours, by persons direct from Nacogdoches. I am informed that a considerable magazine of flour has been lately established at the great crossing of Trinity river, and that troops to the amount of several hundreds were on their march from the westward to the first mentioned place.

The Marquis of Cassa Calvo lately arrived here from the westward, and after two days rest, took his departure for Baton Rouge ; where he has since been followed by captain Ross, with letters prohibiting his return to New Orleans.

The Marquis, whilst here, was visited by myself and officers, but not permitted to approach the fort or cantonment.

Soon after he left us, a Spanish ensign with about twenty men crossed and took post on this side of the Adies, where I consider myself justifiable in suffering them to remain till I hear from the commandant of Nacogdoches, in reply to certain requests lately made to him by order of the secretary of war.

With views of obtaining an answer as soon as possible, my letter to the commandant was forwarded by lieutenant Piatt, who will return by the second of February at furthest, when I shall act as circumstances may require.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

M. PORTER, *Major Artillerists.*

His excellency, Gen. James Wilkinson.

(No. 42.)

NATCHITOCHES, 4th March, 1806.

SIR,

SINCE I last had the honor of addressing you on the eighth ultimo, the Spanish soldiers then stationed at Bayou au Pierre have been withdrawn beyond the Sabine, and the commandant of Nacogdoches has visited this village.

As untimely as this visit of the commandant appeared, when I was informed that it was made for the purpose of conversing with me on business which equally concerned us both, I considered it my duty to admit him.

On calling on him soon after at his quarters, he observed that my letter to him on the subject of aggression was so laconic,

and the expulsion of his troops from the territory east of the Sabine so unexpected, that he was at a loss in what point of light to view either, and had visited me for an explanation. He expressed some surprise that the claims of the United States to the territory in question, were not earlier made known; and affected to be mortified that his troops were driven from it, by a force so superior in point of number, that it would have been folly to oppose them. He appeared desirous of having my opinion on the above mentioned transactions, whether they could be considered in any other point of view than a declaration of war; and if a prohibition of trade between this district and the Spanish interior, would not take place immediately.

To these and other questions and observations equally improper, I returned evasive answers, and left him as soon as decency would permit.

Whatever may have been the pretended object of this visit, I am induced to believe it was made from sinister motives, and viewed the commandant accordingly, till his departure, when I sent a person to observe his motions to the Sabine.

I find it impossible to obtain any certain accounts of the force or movements of the Spaniards in the adjacent province. Reports on this subject are various. They, however, generally agree, that a considerable quantity of ammunition lately reached Nacogdoches, where the governor of St. Antoine, with several hundred troops, is soon expected; and that an attempt to recover and establish a post on the old boundary line will be made as soon as their cavalry are recruited.

Should these reports prove true, which I doubt, and the Spaniards again appear in our vicinity, I trust every thing will be attempted to remove them, which my force and situation will permit.

Horses are only wanting to equip four pieces of my artillery for field service; two others are nearly ready. My command is generally healthy, well clad and armed, and amply supplied with ammunition.

At present, provisions are wanting. Upwards of twenty-seven thousand rations of the beef put up for this post has spoiled for want of proper attention, and has been lately condemned. We have now barely six weeks' flour and meat on hand, and little prospect of receiving more before this is exhausted.

In this case, I consider myself justifiable in purchasing, and shall make the attempt immediately.

I am, very respectfully, sir, your most obedient servant,

M. PORTER, *Major Artillerists, commanding.*

His excellency, General Wilkinson.

(No. 43.)

ST. LOUIS, *April 30, 1806*

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received your favors of the 29th January, and 4th ultimo; the last having taken the road from the first: such is the regularity of our post offices.

The departure of the Marquis de Casa Calvo, is a strong indication that the Dons don't mean to fight. Your civilities to him were strictly proper; your caution, at the same time, strictly correct. A soldier should never fail in kindness to a soldier, even when duty obliges him to cut his throat the next minute; for we are all the instruments of power, and no liberal mind will ever carry personal animosity to the field of battle.

Your letter of the 4th ultimo dissipated a thousand flying reports which had reached this place by various directions. You had been engaged with five hundred Spanish horse, and had been cut; Johnston and his whole company being put to the sword. For my part, I knew the thing was not so, because I understand your neighbours too well: they won't fight until the Gauls prick them into action, and then we must look out for rubbers. Yet, I have received orders by the last mail, to send colonel Cushing directly to you with three complete companies, Lackwood's, Strong's, and Campbell's; and he will leave this place in barges, on the fifth day after the present. He will carry you two four pounders, and I hope, a five inch howitz. You must look out and prepare ground for the encampment of this reinforcement.

I beg my respects to the gentlemen of your command, and am, with respect and esteem,

Dear major, your's, &c.

JA: WILKINSON.

N. B. Lieutenant Pike has made, in the course of the last summer and winter, an interesting tour to the source of the Mississippi, and the waters of the lake Unipique. He reached Prairie des Chiens the 22d inst. on his return; and I daily expect his arrival here with captain Manii, who had been sent on business to that place.

Major Porter, Artillery.

(No. 44.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, *May 6th, 1806.*

SIR,

FROM recent information received from New Orleans and its vicinity, the hostile views of the officers of his Catholic majesty in that quarter have become so evident, as to require the strictest precaution on the part of the United States, and the immediate exertion of the means we possess for securing the rightful possession of the territory of the United States, and for protecting the citizens and their property from the hostile encroachments of our neighbours, the Spaniards.

You will, therefore, with as little delay as practicable, repair to the territory of Orleans, or its vicinity, and take upon yourself the command of the troops in that quarter, together with such militia or volunteers as may turn out for the defence of the country; and you will, by all the means in your power, repel any invasion of the territory of the United States east of the river Sabine, or north, or west of the bounds of what has been called West Florida.

And in case of actual hostilities being commenced by the subjects of his Catholic Majesty on the above described territory, or of any actual attempt to invade any part of said territory, you will repel force by force, to the utmost of your abilities; and take possession of such posts or places as may, in your opinion, most effectually counteract the hostile acts or obvious intention of the invaders.

Directions have been forwarded to governors Claiborne and Williams, for turning out such proportion of the militia of their respective governments as may be found necessary for the protection of the country.

Should you receive any certain information of the movement of any considerable force, either from Mexico or the Havanna, as reinforcements to the force now on the frontiers of Orleans, you will give the earliest notice of it to this department, that measures may be taken for giving you the necessary reinforcements.

Any warlike stores deposited at fort Adams, or in any part of the Orleans territory, will be at your disposal, for the use of the troops, when found necessary.

You will, from time to time, by mail or otherwise, keep the government as particularly informed as may be, of all interesting occurrences.

It will be advisable to embrace the earliest opportunity for giving to the governors of Florida and Texas, a clear view of the principles this government is acting upon in relation

to that country, viz : that while negotiations are pending, as at present, between the government of the United States and Spain, the military posts on neither part ought to be advanced ; that whatever opinions may be entertained in relation to the boundaries of Louisiana, no measures of a military nature ought to be pursued on either part, with a view to the ultimate boundaries ; that it may be relied on, that no acts of hostility on the part of the United States will be attempted against his Catholic majesty's subjects, unless an attempt should be made by said subjects to change the existing state of things, by taking possession of any place not actually occupied by Spanish troops, subsequent to the surrender of the country to the United States ; and that the actual quiet possession of the country by the United States, east of the river Sabine (with the trifling exception of the small place called Bayou Pierre) ought, and will be considered as fully within the limits of the country surrendered to us, on taking possession of Natchitoches ; and therefore, any attempt on the part of his Catholic majesty's officers to disturb the existing state of things, by endeavoring to occupy any new post east of the Sabine, or westward or northward of the former boundaries of what has been called West Florida, must be considered by the government of the United States as an actual invasion of our territorial rights, and will be resisted as such.

It is highly probable that, within a very short time, we shall receive accounts of a satisfactory adjustment of all disputes between us and Spain ; hostilities ought therefore to be avoided by all reasonable means within our power ; but an actual invasion of our territory cannot be submitted to.

To relieve you from some share of responsibility, it is the wish of the President of the United States that, previous to any actual exertion of military force on our part, you should consult governor Claiborne, and if convenient, governor Williams, on the subject merely of the necessity of resorting to hostilities.

You will be responsible for the conduct of all military operations ; and you will, at all times, recollect that every prudent measure in your power is constantly to be pursued, to prevent hostilities on either part : but, if actually commenced on the part of the Spaniards, within the before described limits, you will act with vigor and promptitude in repelling them.

Whether any of the militia, and if any, what numbers shall be called out, should be agreed on between yourself and the governors of the respective territories of Orleans and Mississippi. Such a measure should not be resorted to, unless imperious circumstances demand it.

I am now pursuing measures for forming the necessary arrangements to commence certain fortifications at several places, including New Orleans.

Nine gun boats are directed for New Orleans and its immediate vicinity; several of which will probably arrive there before you reach fort Adams. About two hundred recruits, by the Ohio and by sea, are on their way for filling the companies in that quarter, and others will follow soon.

You will consider this letter as specially authorised by the President of the United States.

I am, very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. DEARBORN.

General James Wilkinson.

(No. 45.)

ST. LOUIS, *March 29th*, 1806.

SIR,

I HAVE just received your despatch of the 6th ultimo; those which preceded it having come safe to hand.

Viewing your situation to be somewhat critical, I think proper to authorise you, should hostilities commence with your neighbours, to order the company from the Appalouza, and the infantry from fort Adams to your succor; taking care to apprise colonel Freeman of this authority, and of your motives.

I shall write you fully in a few days by water, and in the mean time, I am, with respect and esteem, your's, &c.

JA: WILKINSON.

Major M. Porter.

(No. 46.)

NATCHITOCHEs, *7th June*, 1806.

SIR,

YOUR letters of the 17th of January and 19th March are duly received.

In my letter subsequent to the 8th February, I expressed my apprehensions of the designs of the Spaniards to recross the Sabine, and take a position on the Arroya Hundo, in my vicinity.

These apprehensions were strengthened by governor Cordero's letter, which accompanied mine of the 20th

March ; but when it was expected that these designs would be immediately carried into effect, it was reported that the troops collected for this purpose were withdrawn to their former station, and the design laid aside.

The earliest intelligence of these reports was communicated to the commander in chief, and colonel Freeman. Why the Spaniards did not make the threatened attempt, it is impossible to ascertain.

Reports impute it to the interference of the commandant of the Spanish interior provinces, who disapproved of the conduct of the late commandant of Nacogdoches, a principal actor in the business.

The arrest and removal of this officer appear to corroborate these reports. Not an armed Spaniard has been heard of on this side of the Sabine, since removed beyond that river, till yesterday, when I was informed by a credible American, directly from Nacogdoches, that the day before he left that place, an officer and fifty men marched to reconnoitre, if not oppose our exploring party on Red river.

Doctor Sibley, who set out early this morning on a visit to this party, will endeavor to let me know the designs and situation of the Spaniards, if they have made their appearance ; when I shall be ready to act as circumstances may require.

The explorers reached this post on the 19th ultimo, and after being reinforced with a subaltern and twenty men, and amply supplied with provisions, ammunition, and other necessary articles, took their departure on the 2d instant, in high spirits ; and with a determination to fight the Spaniards whenever they attempted to arrest their progress.

Under a belief that this letter will be received before you hear from major Freeman, I take the liberty to inform you, that by the observation made whilst here, by that gentleman, the latitude of this place is discovered to be 31 degrees 46 minutes and 15 seconds north.

I am much gratified in hearing that colonel Cushing with three companies left fort Adams six days since, for this post.

I have the honor, &c.

(Signed)

M. PORTER,

Major Artillerists, commanding.

The hon. Henry Dearborn.

(No. 47.)

NATCHITOCES, July 31, 1806.

SIR,

WHILE at fort Adams, I requested lieutenant colonel Freeman to send me copies of all the instructions he had

received from you or the secretary of war, for his government, as commanding officer of the district ; and to furnish me with whatever information he possessed, which might be considered in any wise interesting to the public service : and I waited the arrival of two mails from Washington city and New Orleans, in expectation of receiving such information and instructions as might be necessary for my government. No information was received from either quarter, and I could not, consistently with your orders of the 6th and 8th of May, remain longer at this post. I therefore determined to proceed, in the hope that the necessary information might be obtained from the commanding officer of this post, which I reached on the 15th ultimo, as stated in a former letter. On my arrival, the several documents, of which I enclose copies marked (A,) were put into my hands by major Porter ; and by the last mail, I received the letter marked (B,) from the secretary of war. I have also received sundry abstracts from letters and instructions addressed to colonel Freeman by yourself and the secretary of war ; but these being unaccompanied by the letters to which they reply, in many instances serve rather to perplex than elucidate the subjects to which they refer.

It appears that Mr. Thomas Freeman has ascended the Red river, accompanied by captain Sparks, lieutenant Humphrey, ensign Duforest, and forty non-commissioned officers and privates, from the companies in this district ; but by whose orders this escort has been sent, (except the subaltern and twenty men detailed from this post, in pursuance of the orders of the secretary of war, marked (C) I have yet to learn ; nothing having been communicated to me on the subject, either by lieutenant colonel Freeman or the secretary of war ; nor is there any person here capable of giving me the requisite information. It would appear by an instruction of lieutenant colonel Freeman to lieutenant Humphrey, which you will find in the file marked (D,) that captain Sparks had been sent to command the escort, and lieutenant Humphrey as an assistant to Mr. Freeman : but the impression here is, that the captain is a joint commissioner with Mr. Freeman, and has nothing to do with the escort ; though no one knows enough about the business to state the object of the enterprise, or the part each individual engaged in it is to act. I am the more particular on this subject, because the commanding officer of this post has once been called on by Mr. Freeman to interpose his authority ; and although the necessity for his interposition may have ceased to exist, it is by no means certain that similar applications may not be made.

The documents marked (D) will explain the case to which I allude, and may shew the necessity for my receiving information and instructions on this subject. If captain Sparks was sent out for the mere purpose of commanding the escort, and his conduct should be such, in the opinion of Mr. Freeman, as to render his recall necessary, it would seem proper for the commanding officer to do so, and supply his place with another officer; but if he has any other appointment from government, it may be highly improper for the commanding officer to interfere.

The letters marked (E) were received a few days after they were written, and the dispatches of Mr. Freeman will be sent to Mr. Dunbar, by lieutenant Smith, who will leave this post in a day or two, for Fort Adams. The only information I had received on the subject of the Spanish party previous to the receipt of Mr. Freeman's letter is contained in the notes from Doctor Sibley, marked (F) but since that time I have learned, that, as the Spaniards do not claim the country to the Red River, below the old Cado village, they did not think proper to interfere with Mr. Freeman, but that as soon as he shall arrive at this village, which they deem within their limits, it is their intention to stop him: and it is generally believed that the party spoken of by Mr. Freeman, has gone to the old Cado village for this purpose. The old Cado village is estimated at upwards of four hundred miles above this post, and lies on the Red River.

It is understood that colonel Herrera, governor of Mont el Rey has lately arrived at Nacogdoches with six companies of mounted militia, estimated at one hundred men each, and having between three and four thousand horses and mules, for the support of which they are under the necessity of ranging about the woods; and there is hardly a day passes without some exaggerated tale of their movements circulating among the citizens. The last report is, that they crossed the Sabine near the upper part of the Bayou Pierre settlement four days since, and were foraging about one league east of the river, and it is thought by some that they will enter the settlement of Bayou Pierre. But I have conversed with an American gentleman who travelled several days with this party, and was with them when they crossed the Sabine, and he assures me their object in crossing was merely to feed their horses, and that they have no intention to remain on this side of the river. He is of opinion that the governor and his militia will recross the river immediately, and return to their homes in all the month of August, and says he has been told so by a number of the officers. A few days will determine whether their object be to take post on this

side the Sabine, and I shall give you the earliest information on the subject, and of the measures I shall take to break them up if they should attempt an establishment.

The new "Rules and Articles of War" were received on the 3d and read to the troops on the 4th instant. It is to be regretted that the number of lashes which a Court Martial may sentence an offender to receive has been diminished, for I am confident that desertions will become much more frequent in consequence of the alteration; in fact we have already discovered its effects in the multiplied desertions which have taken place since the alteration was known.

The mail has just arrived, and I have no letter from you or the Secretary of War.

I have just been informed by lieutenant colonel Freeman, that lieutenant Taylor of the 2d Regiment of Infantry is dead, and that he has appointed lieutenant Swan, to do the duty of Assistant Military Agent for New Orleans, until further orders. Lieutenant Taylor expired on the 3d of July, after a violent fever of only four days.

I shall inclose a duplicate of this letter with the documents, D. E. and F. to colonel Burbeck to be laid before the Secretary of War.

I am sir,

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant,

J. H. CUSHING.

*Brigadier General James Wilkinson,
commanding the Army, St. Louis.*

(No. 48.)

CANTONMENT, MISSOURI, *August 2d, 1806.*

SIR,

It is with sensible regret I address you from this place instead of Fort Adams, where I expected to have been three weeks ago; but I flatter myself the causes of my delay may excuse it.

Your order for my descent of the Mississippi was founded on "information received from New Orleans and its vicinity, of the evident hostile views of the officers of his Catholic Majesty in that quarter," but the circumstances on which this information was grounded, having ceased, as is fully evinced by the enclosed extracts of letters received from major Porter, lieutenant colonel Freeman and colonel Cushing, bearing date the 5th of April, the 29th of May, and the

5th of June; I considered it a primary duty to adjust my public accounts before my departure; and as the civil concerns of the territory and the Indian department had strong claims to my immediate attention, I was persuaded a few weeks here could be more profitably applied to the public service than elsewhere, which will I think be apparent to you after the examination of the accompanying documents.

About the period of my letter of the 28th June, the Osages then here, young and old, were seized with a species of influenza, which forbade their removal, and I discovered that all the deputies of the Missouri except the Panis were disgusted with.....which rendered my interference indispensable to tranquillize and send them away content, as you will perceive from the talk enclosed in No. 1. The Panis informed me they had been engaged by a party formed at St. Louis for some commercial or political speculation (or perhaps both) destined to St. Affee, which attempted to embarrass the movement of lieutenant Pike, by arresting his Panis and Canzis interpreter. My correspondence with Mr. Chouteau, and the letter to doctor Robinson, will throw some lights on this subject, which have been since more fully explained to me by an American merchant in St. Louis, who had been invited to become a member of the society. The outline of the plan is to make a grand establishment at the towns of the Osage, or those of the Panis republicque, from whence a connection is to be formed with the Iya,tans, and under their protection, art, intrigue and corruption, are to be employed to open a channel of intercourse with St. Affee. The ostensible leader of this enterprize is, I am informed, a certain..... a native Spaniard. I can discover no advantage to the United States to be derived from this mercantile speculation, but can readily perceive that the gold which the society seeks, may be employed to disaffect and detach the Indians from us, and to unite them to the Spaniards. In consequence of this discovery all passports will be refused for the Canzes River, and lieutenant Pike will have a good look out for any intruders from this quarter, who may be found in that region.

You have under cover of No. 2. a copy of lieutenant Pike's instructions, and of the talk I have sent to White Hair and the Grand Peste, which may I hope prove satisfactory. I have ordered lieutenant Pike about six hundred dollars worth of goods at the selling price here, to disburse his expenses and as presents to the Canzes, Panis and Iya,tans, and I have furnished him about two hundred and eighty dollars worth of instruments to enable him to take the latitude of places.— The very interesting map of the Mississippi to its source in Red Cedar Lake, and the journal of this officer are in my

possession, but are too bulky for the mail, therefore if I should not find a safe conveyance by land, I propose to take them down the river and forward them by water to Baltimore ; and by this conveyance, I send you a statistical view of the Indians of the Mississippi and its vicinity, with sundry documents relative to the trade and establishments of the British N. West company, within the limits of the United States.

As it depends much on circumstances what course Mr. Pike may take, I cannot decide whether he will return to this place, or descend the Red River to Natchitoches, tho' I know his enterprize will lead him to attempt the last route, and in such case he will certainly be accompanied by a party of Iyatan chiefs, whom I would propose to send to the seat of government by sea, as the most expeditious and economical route ; but I must request of you instructions on this point, which will be in season if they reach me in November at Fort Adams, to which place be pleased to direct your dispatches.

My stay here has been fortunate in relation to Graveline's visit to the Reecaras nation, for he had refused to proceed in the perogue, with the corporal and four as you proposed, and it was agreed that the Titons would not suffer him to pass ; I therefore could not insure his mission further than the Mahas ; but the fortunate return of the elder Dorion, from the Iyawas of the river Dumoine where he had been to make peace between that nation and the Sioux of St. Peters, has after some difficulty on the score of his age, it being sixty eight, relieved our embarrassments, as he has undertaken to land Graveline at the point of his destination. They are now far advanced towards the Mahas in the boat of a Mr. McClellan, with the chief of that nation, the Ottos, Missouris and Canzes. There they will have a couple of men and a canoe, and make the best way the state of things may permit.

This Dorion was sent down from the Sioux of the Missouri last year by captain Lewis, and has more power I am assured over that band than any other man, red or white. Indeed his management of Indians generally is reported to be transcendent. He is almost worn out, but may still be useful and should therefore be cherished. You have under cover copies of my instructions to these men, and also to Boilvain. He is now pressing for his destination, and tells me he will be off next week. He is slow and dilatory, but I have as much confidence in his attachment to the United States as any Frenchman of the territory. One hundred and fifty dollars worth of merchandize have been furnished Dorion and Grave-

line for their expenses, which will not disburse one half they will be obliged to give the Indians that they must pass in their route.

From the papers under cover No. 4. you will perceive that our affairs on the Illinois do not wear the most pleasant aspect ; the remaining prisoners of the Osage nation have been positively refused, a man has been deliberately murdered, the Americans have been indiscriminately menaced, goods sent to redeem the captives have been plundered, and the letter of the factor at Chicago, announces the intention of the Pottowatomies to make another stroke at the Osages. If this conduct is not checked severely, the example will be followed, and a general defection, insolence and outrage may extend itself throughout the nations of the Mississippi. I consider it my duty to warn the Osage of the meditated blow, for which purpose I shall send off an express to-morrow to Lt. Pike by land, who will certainly be found at the grand Osage towns, if he has not been obstructed on his voyage.

I am sorry to inform you that the Puant prisoners confined at St. Louis for murder, have broke jail and made their escape, together with a citizen confined on the application of governor Harrison, for a murder committed in the territory of Indiana.

The cabal which has laboured so assiduously to distract this territory, and which originated with.....has, I am now convinced, for a long time received the secret support of..... a man of the most profound dissimulation I have ever known. I have no doubt that, under his and.....management, every engine is now at work to establish a strong line of distinction between the French and American population, and the better to aid the.....recommendation for this government, he and.....are to run together in a petition for the purpose, before the present incumbent is removed.

But sir, why do I complain of such things, whilst daily threatened by the heaviest domestic calamity? For more than thirty days, Mrs. Wilkinson has trembled over the grave, and I have waited in agonizing suspense the moment of her dissolution, whilst my mind has been harrassed by a load of public engagements ; and now, sir, I shall leave her, in a state of most feeble precarious convalescence, under the racking impression that we part forever. May God preserve my bitterest enemy from a similar trial.

With perfect respect,

I am sir, your obedient servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

The hon. H. Dearborn, Secretary of War.

(No. 49.)

NATCHEZ, *September 8th*, 1806.

SIR,

I ARRIVED at this place last evening at 6 o'clock, and addressed a note to the Secretary of the Territory, (Governor Williams being absent,) of which you have a copy under cover, with his answer. This morning I waited on him, and have seen the plan adopted by Governor Claiborne and himself, the first article of which appears to be in direct opposition to your order, respecting the removal of the Spaniards from Bayou Pierre; to which place I understand they have fallen back, from the vicinity of the Adies; and I hope they may continue there until my arrival at Natchitoches, for which place I shall commence my journey, the moment after I have arranged with the Secretary of the Territory for such auxiliary force of the militia as may eventually become necessary from his jurisdiction. Governor Claiborne has, I understand, arranged the militia in the western counties of the Territory of Orleans, but I shall discourage their march until I have penetrated the designs of the Spaniard, and may find him deaf to the solemn appeal which I shall make to his understanding, his interests, and duty. Let the President be assured, sir, I shall drain the cup of conciliation, to maintain the peace of our country, and that the sword shall not be drawn but in the last extremity, after reason and remonstrance have failed to preserve inviolate our territory, east of the Sabine. But at the same time that an awful responsibility restrains the inclinations and ambition of the soldier to this temperate course of conduct, in opposition to the ardour which I think I discern in the executive officers of these territories, I will pledge my life to him that no act shall be suffered, within my knowledge, to tarnish the national honor, or affect the lustre of his administration.

If the strong precautions embraced by my instructions to colonel Cushing, of which I transmitted you a copy from St. Louis, have prevented the effusion of blood, I must believe I have done some good to the state, because the retrogression of the Spaniards has rendered the ultimate resort unnecessary, at least for the present; and as nothing can be lost and every thing may be gained by a little delay, it seems better the opportunity for commencing hostilities should have escaped, than that it should have been seized on "to let slip the dogs of war," before the effect of conciliatory measures had been duly tested.

The retrograde of the Spaniards is not accounted for, but

may be ascribed to three causes. The unhealthiness of the troops—the want of forage for the immense cavalcade with which they are encumbered—or the failure of provisions. But as they would scarcely have made so formidable and bold an advance in the face of the prohibition uttered by major Porter, without positive orders from the competent authority ; it is reasonable to presume, when the cause of their retrogression has been removed, they may resume their former position, for which event some preparatory arrangements must be commenced.

The Spaniards who have approached Natchitoches, being all mounted and without artillery, and each private being obliged to keep up four horses and a mule for service, out of his pay, of one hundred dollars per month, it will be impossible for them to maintain a fortification ; but the same circumstances will enable them to refuse to give battle to our infantry, at their discretion. To remedy this disadvantage, and enable me should I be forced to appeal to arms, to drive them effectually beyond the Sabine, or to cut them up, I shall endeavor to procure about four or five hundred dragoons and mounted militia from the two territories, unless I should find them so incautious as to enable me by a forced march of the established troops, to surprise their camp under cover of the night ; but this is scarcely to be expected, if the commanding officer possesses a single spark of military knowledge or experience.

A blow once struck, it would appear expedient that we should make every advantage of it, and if men and means are furnished, I will soon plant our standard on the left bank of Grand river : in the mean time, the reduction of Nacogdoches, and Baton Rouge, would secure the free navigation of the Mississippi, and drive the enemy back on the side of Mexico, 400 miles to Sant Atonio, and should hostilities take place, and I find the occupancy of these posts necessary to counteract the hostile acts, or intentions of the enemy ; I shall agreeably to your instructions, take possession of them.

But I must beg leave to remark to you, that for distant operations, or the protection of our western frontier, against the predatory incursions of the Spanish cavalry, a body of mounted men is absolutely indispensable.

After all, I have more apprehensions from the want of camp equipage and provisions, than from an enemy ; yet I cannot speak with precision to those points, as I am unacquainted with the stock on hand : Should our negotiations with Spain eventuate without effect, or take a menacing aspect, and the government should determine on offensive mea-

tures in this quarter, cavalry arms and equipments, knapsacks, haversacks, linen frocks, tents and camp furniture, of every species, with infantry arms and accoutrements, should be forwarded on without a moment's delay, and I should be authorised to mount as many men as the service may require.

I find strong delusions (real or artificial) prevailing here, with respect to the safety of these territories against the Choctaw Indians; against an attack of the Spaniards from Pensacola, and an insurrection of the French in the Territory of Orleans. The Indians have been so frequently deceived by the Spaniards, and stand so much in awe of the United States, that they will not take up the hatchet in favour of those, or against these; and I apprehend nothing from the discontents of the French, before they have satisfactory assurances (and appearances too) of substantial European support; because the poor have nothing to hazard for, and the rich have too much to lose, and stand in too much terror of their slaves to leave their families. With respect to the Spaniards, I have received the following detail this day from a confidential friend.

At the town of Pensacola, the fort on Rose Island, and the Barancas at the mouth of the harbour, 450 men, at Mobile 200 men, and at Baton Rouge 50 men. Pensacola being the grand depot of what is called West Florida, with its small garrison divided into three detachments, for the protection of the town and the guard of the harbour's mouth 12 miles distant, not a man can be spared from it. Mobile menaced, and liable to be attacked, and carried by our regular troops and militia in that quarter, is already too weak; and with respect to Baton Rouge the works are tumbling to pieces, and it is surrounded by a disaffected American population, which could overwhelm the feeble garrison, (a mere *locum-tenens*) whenever required so to do by our government.

But by way of precaution, I shall immediately transmit orders to New Orleans, for four of our gallies to be stationed in lake Pontchartrain, and the strait of the Regolets, against any approach towards the city by that communication, and our batteries at Plaquimine will secure the pass of the river. I shall increase the detachment at Point Coupée to seventy five men to be held in readiness to take governor Grandpré and his garrison at a moment's warning, and I shall send orders to the commanding officer on the Tombigbee, to be prepared with his regular force, and two hundred militia, to invest Mobile and carry it if practicable, so soon as he shall receive orders to that effect, whilst a party of militia from

the same quarter will be ordered to make a feint on Pensacola, to put them in fear and prevent any succour being sent to the former place; and should I find myself obliged to attack the Mexicans, the moment I have taken my resolution, orders will be sent to those points for prompt co-operation.

Thus sir, I give you the general outline of the plan I mean to adopt, should I be coerced to it by the conduct of our neighbours; but in the mean time, positive orders will be issued to the regular military to prevent any encroachment, menace, or outrage on their part, and I shall press upon the executives of these territories the necessity for similar observances on the part of our citizens. The enclosed copy of a correspondence between our officer on the Tombigbee and the Spanish commandant of Mobile, seems to render the latter precaution indispensable.

You have, under cover, an abstract of our whole regular force in this quarter, for the defence of the Mobile, the Mississippi, and our Western frontier; from which, deduct one fourth for detachment, casualties, incapacity and disease, and you will have a fair view of our operative force.

I have no letter from you at this place, or from colonel Cushing, but I expect to find communications at Fort Adams from whence I shall again write you. I propose to debark at the mouth of Red River, and to make my way through the swamps, to the first settlements in the route to Natchitoches, from whence I shall find a path.

I have the honor to be with perfect respect,

Sir, your obedient &c.

JA: WILKINSON.

The hon. General Dearborn, Secretary of War.

(No. 50.)

(COPY.)

Head-Quarters of the Army of the United States.

NATCHITOCHEs, September 24th, 1806.

SIR,

AFTER the recent communications which have passed between his excellency governor Herrera, colonel Cushing, and governor Claiborne, and his reiterated repulsion of their reasonable and rightful demands, I will confess to your excellency, that nought but the very high and solemn obligations which I owe to humanity, could vanquish the repugnance with which I now have the honor to address you, on a

topic profoundly interesting to our respective nations, inas-much as it may involve a question of peace or war.

The differences of opinion which have prevailed concerning the contested limits of Louisiana, having been submitted to amicable negotiation by our respective sovereigns, the appeal to rational enquiry is an admission of the dubiousity of the right, and therefore should prevent any change of military positions, posterior to the delivery of the province of Louisiana to the United States.

The government of the American union, founded in right and conducted by reason, has been instructed by the history of other times, how to value the blessings of peace; and being unambitious of conquest or military fame, is desirous to preserve a fair and friendly understanding with all the powers of the earth.

Thus circumstanced, and under daily expectation of a favorable issue to the depending negotiations, it would mark a sanguinary spirit, and be a most ungracious and unwarrantable deed, were the military officers of either government by an act of precipitancy, to frustrate the benevolent views of pacific discussion, and make way for the commencement of hostilities, whose final issue may baffle human foresight, but whose probable consequences would be scenes of revolution and bloodshed, offensive to humanity, and subversive of the general policy of nations.

In this state of things, I am ready to pledge myself, that pending the negotiations of the two countries, nothing shall be attempted against his catholic majesty's subjects or territories by the troops under my command, unless his officers should attempt, as they have already done, to innovate the "*statum quo*," at the surrender of the province, by occupying new ground, or erecting new posts, or unless they should trespass on the rights of the citizens, or violate the sovereignty of these states. The former conduct will compel counter-movements and occupancies, and the latter will not only justify recrimination, but will infallibly excite it, and thus hostilities may be produced notwithstanding the pacific dispositions of the high powers, to whom we are respectively accountable.

When the troops of the United States took possession of this post, the Spanish commandant from whom it was received, did not define the limits of his jurisdiction; yet it was notorious, that Nacogdoches formed the barrier post of the approximate province of Texas.

It was known also that controversies had existed between France and Spain, respecting the western limits of Louisiana,

and we had been assured by Monsicur Laussatt, the French commissioner, who delivered the province to the United States, that the pretensions of France went as far west as the Riodel Norte. But we were not informed that any line of demarcation had ever been traced to partition these provinces.

Whether such a line of territorial jurisdiction had ever been established or not, between the provinces of Louisiana, and Texas ; one had been rendered indispensable by the sale of the former to the United States, for the administration of justice, the security of property, and the prevention of hostile collisions; and these states with pretensions far more extensive, adopted the Sabine river as the most obvious, most convenient, most natural, and least exceptionable temporary boundary.

I am therefore, sir, commanded by the president of the United States to inform you, "that the actual quiet possession of the country by the United States, east of the river Sabine, ought to be and will be considered as fully within the limits of the country surrendered to the United States, on taking possession of this place ; and therefore, any attempt on the part of his catholic majesty's officers to disturb the existing state of things, by endeavoring to occupy any new posts east of the Sabine, or westward, or northward of the former boundaries of what has been called West Florida, must be considered by the government of the United States, as an actual invasion of their territorial rights, and will be resisted accordingly." While I submit these commands to your grave consideration, in the hope they may have due weight ; it becomes my duty to demand from you the withdrawal of the troops of Spain to the west of the Sabine.

My sense of the high respect which is due from one soldier to another, prohibits the idea of menace ; but as our honor forbids stratagem or deception before our swords have been drawn, I owe it to my own fame, and to the national character, to warn you, that the ultimate decision of the competent authority has been taken, that my orders are absolute, and my determination fixed, to assert, and, under God, to sustain the jurisdiction of the United States to the Sabine river, against any force which may be opposed to me.

Retire then sir, I conjure you, the troops of your command from the ground in controversy, and spare the effusion of human blood, without prejudicing your own honor, or the substantial interests of his majesty, your royal master.

Colonel H. Cushing, chef des états major of the army of the United States, has my orders to deliver this letter to you, and to wait a reasonable time for your answer.

I pray God to keep your excellency in his holy protection
for many years,

And have the honor to be
Your most obedient
humble servant,

JA : WILKINSON.

I certify that the following copy of a letter was transmitted
officially to the war office.

JOHN SMITH, C. C.

(No. 51.)

NACOGDOCHES CAMP, *September 29th, 1806.*

SIR,

BY the hands of colonel Thomas Cushing, chief of
the general staff of the United States army, I had yester-
day the honor to receive your excellency's letter, written
from your head quarters at Natchitoches.

Not being authorised to enter into a discussion, with re-
spect to the serious and interesting subjects on which you
treat, I hope your excellency will excuse the liberty I take
in transmitting your letter, with the utmost dispatch, to the
captain general brigadier Nemesio Salcedo, under whose or-
ders I act, and I shall transmit to your excellency, in the
same manner, his answer, by the hands of an officer of my
staff.

While thus acting, I have the honor to offer to your excel-
lency my respects and consideration, praying God to protect
and guard your life for many years.

I am, sir,

Your excellency's most humble
and obedient servant,

ANTONIO CORDERO.

His excellency, James Wilkinson,

General of the army of the United States.

(No. 52.)

(COPY.)

Head Quarters,

NATCHITOCHEs, *October 4th, 1806.*

SIR,

I HAVE had the honor to receive your excellency's
letter of the 29th ultimo, by colonel Cushing, and shall ex-

pect the answer of his excellency the captain general Salcedo with solicitude.

In the mean time I shall move forward towards the Sabine, and to prevent the misinterpretation of my motives, I consider it proper to apprise you, that this movement is made solely to demonstrate the pretensions of the United States to the territory east of that river, and with no hostile intentions against the troops or realms of Spain.

This step has been rendered essential to the honor of the United States, by the late movements and occupancies of his excellency governor Herrera, and is also justified by the position which the troops of your excellency's command have lately taken, immediately on the western bank of the Sabine, sixty miles advanced of Nacogdoches.

I avail myself of a casual but certain conveyance to transmit this letter to your excellency, and pray God to keep you in his holy protection for many years.

(Signed) JA: WILKINSON.

*His excellency Antonio Cordero, commander in chief
of the troops of Spain, on the eastern frontier of
the province of Texas.*

I certify that the foregoing copy of a letter was transmitted officially to the war office.

JOHN SMITH, C. C.

(No. 53.)

Head Quarters.

NACOGDOCHES, October 2d, 1806.

SIR,

HAVING received a letter that general Don Nemesio Salcedo has inclosed me for his excellency William C. Claiborne, governor of New Orleans, and being informed that he is not now at the post of Natchitoches; I take the liberty of inclosing it to your excellency under cover, and of entreating you to have the goodness to forward it to him.

I have the honor to renew my respects to your excellency, and remain with the highest consideration,

Your excellency's most humble

And obedient servant,

(Signed) ANTONIO CORDERO.

*To his excellency James Wilkinson,
general of the armies of the United States.*

(No. 54.)

NATCHITOCHES, *Head Quarters, Oct. 8th, 1806.*

SIR,

I HAVE had the honor to receive your excellency's letter of the 2d inst. covering a dispatch for his excellency governor Claiborne, which shall receive particular attention; but I regret to find by its contents, that the territorial pretensions of the United States are resisted, and those of Spain asserted in the face of those pretensions.

With perfect respect, I have the honor to be
Your excellency's most obedient servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

*His excellency governor Cordero,
commanding the troops of Spain,
Nacogdoches.*

(No. 55.)

ENCAMPMENT AT NACOGDOCHES, 11th Oct. 1806.

YOUR excellency was informed by my letter of the 29th ultimo, of my having sent yours of the 24th of the same month, to the captain general brigadier Don Nemesio Salcedo, under whom I act, as I did not possess the authority competent to its discussion; and as the reply to it was to come from the said chief, I flattered myself that from motives of humanity, and from the good harmony which reigns between our governments, your excellency would have been pleased to have awaited his answers to decide as to your operations; inasmuch as I am not at liberty to deviate from a compliance with the orders which govern me, to recognize the Hondo branch, as the limit of this province. Contrary to this expectation, I see by the letter of your excellency of the 4th instant, which I have just received, that you have directed your troops towards the Sabine river, without any pretension hostile to the Spaniards, (troops) and only with the object of sustaining the jurisdiction of the United States east of that river.

Your excellency knows very well the sacred duties of a soldier, and of consequence I must say to your excellency, that without in any manner attributing the result of the operation which your excellency has undertaken to an act of hostility provoked by my government, I must oppose myself to it in the discharge of the obligation under which I

act, to prevent the aggression of the United States, and to maintain as long as I am able, with undeviating integrity, the dominions of my sovereign.

I leave to your excellency the choice after you receive this letter, praying God to guard your life many years.

(Signed)

ANTONIO CORDERO.

To his excellency James Wilkinson,

General of the army of the United States of America.

(No. 56.)

NACOGDOCHES, 21st October, 1806.

SIR,

I have received by the hands of the bearer, Jacob Bean, your excellency's letter of the 14th instant, in which your excellency is so obliging as to inform me, that the said person is one of those that have presented themselves for the purpose of reclaiming negroes, taken up under the protection of my government; and in which your excellency at the same time tells me, that although it does not become you to enter into any engagement whatever in the name of his excellency governor Claiborne, you have no doubt in assuring me that all just measures that may be adopted by the king, my master, relative to the property of individuals, will be reciprocated by the government of the United States.

The returning of negroes that have taken refuge in this province, so generously ordered by my general, even without waiting for orders from my sovereign, is a proof in no wise equivocal of the excellent harmony to which we pretend; a harmony which has been ordered to be observed to the government of the United States, and which is founded on a complete reciprocity of justice.

When my general directed his letter of the 18th ultimo to his excellency governor Claiborne, of which your excellency has been informed, satisfying him on the five points about which they treated, and in virtue of which I wrote under date of the 2d instant to the aforesaid governor (which to your excellency is well known) concerning the negroes, I did not expect that your excellency would alter the position of your troops (of which you have advised me under date of the 4th of this month) as it is an operation that entirely alters the reciprocity which existed.

Your excellency had not received the letter of my general for his excellency governor Claiborne, which came to your hands only on the 7th, to dispose your excellency to such a

manœuvre; and I am informed by your letter sent me under date of the 8th, that the contents of my general's letter shall have particular attention.

This offer of your excellency, contrary to the minute knowledge you have acquired of the unalterable rights of the king my master, relative to the lands claimed, ought to have made you countermand the order given for the movement of your troops; and I have been in hourly expectation of such information (which as yet I have not received) as entirely essential to the existence of the good understanding which unites our governments, and which it is our first duty to preserve.

The affair of the negroes, is one of those adhering to the principal question which has been entered upon in the aforesaid letter of my general; and the settlement of a point of minor moment would avail nothing, while the principal question, which is of greater magnitude, remains pending. However, I must represent to your excellency, that, pending the answer of my general (which I expect very shortly) to your excellency's letter of the 24th ultimo, I have thought it my duty to return the negroes demanded by Bean, and generally to fulfil the order in favor of all other individuals of that government, who are now or may hereafter be, in a similar situation. I wait for this letter, in order that this suspension may be made to correspond with that complete reciprocity which the rights of the king my master exact, and that in the discharge of my duty my acquiescence may meet with no blame.

I return your excellency my respects, and with high consideration have the honor to be

Sir,

Your excellency's most humble
and obedient servant,

(Signed)

ANTONIO CORDERO.

His excellency general James Wilkinson.

(No. 57.)

NACOGDOCHES, 24th October, 1806.

SIR,

SINCE the 11th of the present month, when I received your excellency's letter of the 8th instant, in which you acknowledge that you are apprized of the contents of the letter of my general of the 18th ultimo, written to his excellency governor Claiborne, and that it should receive particu-

lar attention ; I never doubted that your excellency, impressed with the good harmony that unites our governments, and of the unalterable declarations of my general, which the conduct of the Spanish troops justifies, would have countermanded the order given yours to proceed towards the Sabine, as an act opposed to the good understanding which is known by your excellency to unite our governments.

I have already answered your excellency's letter of the 14th, concerning the negroes, by the bearer Jacob Bean ; and I cannot doubt that in attending to the present, (which I direct anew to your excellency) you will, in compliance with the good understanding that we ought to preserve, suspend the movement of your troops, prevent their passing the Arroya Yondo, and be pleased to await the answer of my general to your letter of the 24th ultimo, which I am in momentary expectation of receiving, and which shall be dispatched to your excellency without a moment's delay.

This I expect from your excellency ; but, if after all my protests, you precipitate your operations, you must yourself be responsible to our governments, for the consequences that may follow.

I have the honor to repeat to your excellency my respects. May God preserve your life many years.

Sir,

Your most attentive and obedient servant,

(Signed)

ANTONIO CORDERO.

His excellency General James Wilkinson.

(No. 58.)

(COPY.

Head Quarters,

CAMP POTRERO, *October 29th, 1806.*

SIR,

ON the 26th inst. when under march, I had the honor to receive your excellency's letter of the 21st, by the hands of Jacob Bean, and the day before yesterday Don Francis Viana delivered me that of the 24th instant.

My professional engagements must be my apology for not answering those letters sooner, and I hope the explanation I shall now offer to you may justify the consistency of my conduct, and evince the sincerity of my dispositions, to preserve the good understanding which happily subsists between our respective governments.

In my letter to your excellency the 24th ultimo, I very

frankly exposed to you a literal transcript from the instructions of the supreme executive of the United States, in which you will perceive (reference being had thereto) the solemn avowal of his pretensions, and the indispensable obligations which of consequence have devolved on me. In that letter, I emphatically remarked to your excellency, "that the ultimate decision of the competent authority had been taken, that my orders were absolute, and my determination fixed, to assert, and, under God, to sustain the jurisdiction of the United States to the Sabine river, against any force which may be opposed to me." Your excellency's transmittal of my letter to the captain general, whose orders you act under, is a conclusive testimony of the friendly and humane motives by which you are actuated; but that measure could neither affect the pretensions of my government, nor impair the force of my instructions.

Your excellency appears to lay much stress on the letter of the captain general Salcedo to governor Claiborne, but as that letter treats generally on subjects of civil import, and as my functions here are merely military, it does not fall within my province to take particular cognizance of it. I will however beg leave to observe that his excellency's exposition of the grounds on which he asserts the Arroya Honda to be the line of provincial demarcation, carries with it an air of much plausibility, but being diametrically opposed to the sense and expression of my government, I cannot respect it; on the contrary, the captain general's repulsion of the pretensions of the United States, and your protest against my avowed purpose to cross the Arroya Honda *carry with them a species of menace and defiance, which an independent nation cannot brook, and instead of arresting my course, have a natural tendency to accelerate it; for I am here not to adjust principles, but to execute orders.*

Approximated as I find myself to the threshold of hostilities, it is a source of happiness to me, that I should be opposed by a gentlemen of your excellency's experience, capacity, and liberal spirit; because it inspires the hope, that an accord of dispositions may produce mutual concessions to spare the sufferings of humanity, and preserve the peace of our respective nations on honorable terms.

Your excellency is sensible of the extreme delicacy, with which a military man may exercise his discretion when shackled by specific orders, yet such instances have occurred even on the field of battle, and must frequently be necessary when operations are at issue a thousand miles from the sources of authority. Believing that the controversy in which we

are engaged, presents a case precisely in point, I am willing to risque the approbation of my government, to perpetuate the tranquillity of these inhospitable wilds, where, waving the point of honor, the subject of contest is scarcely worth the blood of one brave man.

Permit me then in the true spirit of conciliation, to propose to your excellency without yielding a pretension, ceding a right, or interfering with the discussions which belong to our superiors ; to restore the "statu quo" at the delivery of the province of Louisiana to the United States, by the withdrawal of our troops from the points they at present occupy, to the posts of Nacogdoches and Natchitoches respectively. Your excellency's assent to this proposition shall be conclusive on my conduct, and I will commence my retrograde on the same day you may break up your camp on the right bank of the Sabine, under the joint stipulation that the troops of my command shall not cross the Arroya Honda, so long as those under your orders are restrained from passing the Sabine, or until we may receive further instructions from our respective governments.

This letter will be handed to your excellency by my aid-de-camp Walter Burling, Esq. a citizen and soldier of high respectability, who will receive your answer to this address.

I pray God to keep your excellency in his holy protection, an hundred years.

(Signed)

JA: WILKINSON.

*His excellency Antonio Cordero, commander in chief
of the troops of Spain, on the western frontier of
the province of Texas.*

I certify that the foregoing copy of a letter was transmitted officially to the war office.

JOHN SMITH, C. C.

(No. 58. a.)

(COPY.)

Head Quarters,

CAMP POTRERO, October 30th, 1806.

SIR,

I wrote your excellency yesterday morning by my aid-de-camp Burling, and in the evening had the honor to receive by the hands of captain Desada of your provincial corps, a letter from his excellency the captain general Salcedo, of the 12th instant, in which he recognizes the receipt of that which

I addressed you on the 24th ultimo, but barely makes reference to the letter which he had written to governor Claiborne on the 18th, without responding to a single proposition made by me.

I therefore will beg leave to refer to your excellency's particular consideration my letter of yesterday, in the hope that no impediment may be opposed to the amicable propositions which I have had the honor to offer you. This proposition agreed to, I shall immediately lead the main body of my troops into winter quarters at New Orleans.

Wishing your excellency the protection of heaven, and a long life of fame and happiness.

I have the honor to be with profound respect,
Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) JA: WILKINSON.

*His excellency Antonio Cordero, commander in chief
of the troops of Spain, in the western frontier of
the province of Texas.*

I certify that the within copy of a letter was transmitted officially to the war office,

JOHN SMITH, C. C.

(No. 59.)

GUASOQUILLA, 12th October, 1806.

SIR,

THE colonel Don Antonio Cordero, governor of the province of Texas, has transmitted to me your original letter of the 24th of September last, containing the reasons which, in your opinion would prevent all hostile proceedings between the troops of the United States, and those of the king my master, if the latter withdraw themselves to the right bank of the river Sabine; your excellency erroneously supposing, that the lands they have occupied from the said river to the Arroya Honda belong to the province of Louisiana, and consequently to the government of the United States.

On the 18th of September I wrote to the governor of Louisiana, Mr William C. Claiborne, upon the same business, having present the letter that I directed to the commandant of the forces of the frontier, lieutenant colonel Don Simon de Herrera, in terms from which your excellency may discover that the letter must already have been received. And this being all the answer that the letter of your excellency requires, I do not for a moment doubt but that its perusal will convince you that my reasons cannot be more

consistent, or that in justice I ought to oblige myself to proceed more opportunely in the present circumstances, and actual state of affairs. Actuated by this motive, I beg leave to offer my respects to your excellency, and pray God to preserve your life for many years.

(Signed)

NEMESIO SALCEDO.

His excellency Senor Don James Wilkinson.

(No. 60.)

NACOGDOCHES, 1st November, 1806.

SIR,

SINCE yesterday I have here had the honor of receiving the two letters of your excellency. That of the 30th ult was the first that came to my hand, which your excellency delivered to captain Sada; after which I received another of the 29th of same month, which has been delivered to me this day, by your aid-de-camp — Burling Esq. a citizen and soldier of high respect in your troops.

The contents of both embrace points of the highest consideration, and reciprocal benefit to two nations, whose chiefs now treat, and agree on their respective interests, with the most perfect understanding. Your excellency guided by the same principles has proposed measures of conciliation in the extraordinary movements upon this frontier; having the goodness to direct them to me, as to an authority competent to act in the present case; but permit me to exhibit to your excellency, the difference between your excellency, an authorised general in chief, who determines and executes, and me, a delegate who obeys: that the stipulation of a chief of the rank of your excellency, requires the concurrence of another of equal rank, in order to be sanctioned and have due validity; and that, in the singular aspect which the present delicate situation of this frontier presents, apart from the tranquillity of peace, and without any formality whatever, or the least anticipation of war; the conduct of a subaltern chief like me, to embrace any other part than that which is prescribed to him by blind obedience, would be highly presumptuous.

This therefore obliges me to direct both documents to my general, and to wait their result. I wish in the interim that your excellency, persuaded of the purity of my intentions, and guided by the rectitude of those by which you are animated, and the great talents of which you are possessed, will as master of your own powers, adopt for the operations of your

troops a decorous measure, that may avoid whatever might tend to a breach between the two powers who are averse to it, and whom heretofore the most perfect harmony has happily united. I hope at the same time, that your excellency will banish the idea of a menace which you have attributed to some expressions in my official communications, and ascribe them to the true spirit by which I am governed, and which will be inseparable from me, in discharging to their full extent, the duties of my career on the military theatre, sincerely confessing that I shall hold it a great honor, to receive lessons from your excellency as a worthy master of the art.

I pray to God to prosper the life of your excellency many years, having the honor to reiterate myself,

Excellent sir,

Your most attentive and obedient servant,

(Signed) ANTONIO CORDERO.

*His excellency senor James Wilkinson, general in chief
of the army of the United States of America.*

(No. 61.

*Head quarters of the troops of the United States
camp, on the left bank of the Sabine river.*

November 4th, 1806.

SIR,

THE conciliatory aspect of the letter which I last evening had the honor to receive from your excellency, by the hands of my aid-de-camp, Mr. Burling, and the pacific dispositions uniformly manifested in your correspondence with me, having removed all suspicions from my mind of meditated hostility on the part of Spain against the United States, after fulfilling my orders, by the assertion of the jurisdiction claimed by those states, I feel it incumbent on me to demonstrate by some act of unequivocal import, the amicable spirit reciprocated by my government, towards that which you have the honor to serve.

I therefore think proper to apprise your excellency of my purpose, to break up my camp at this place in a day or two, and to withdraw the troops of my command to Natchitoches, in the firm persuasion that the orders which have been issued to interdict the troops under your excellency's command from passing the river, may be continued in force, and strictly observed, during the negotiations now at issue; because a contrary conduct must be received by the executive of the United States as an act of hostility.

I take my leave of you sir, with the assurance of my high respect for your personal character, and my prayers to the almighty to keep you in his holy protection many years.

(Signed)

JA: WILKINSON.

*His excellency Antonio Cordero, commander in chief
of the troops of Spain, in the western frontier of
the province of Texas.*

I certify that the within copy of a letter was transmitted officially to the war office.

JOHN SMITH, C. C.,

(No. 62.)

Encampment on the Sabine,

November 5th, 1806.

SIR,

LIEUTENANT Hughes, your excellency's aid-de-camp, placed yesterday in my possession your acceptable letter of the same day, together with another for colonel Antonio Cordero. Your excellency having the goodness to transmit me at the same time a copy of its contents, relative to your resolution to return with the troops under your command to your head quarters at Natchitoches, and proposing that, whilst they were adjusting between Spain and the United States, the differences subsisting with respect to the pretensions to the territory as far as the river Sabine, the troops of his majesty should not pass that river, and also that those of the United States should not cross the Hondo branch.

Your excellency clearly manifests, by this operation, your pacific wishes, to preserve the reciprocal good harmony which ought to exist between the two nations. This proceeding obliges me to retire likewise to Nacogdoches with those troops I have the honor to command, leaving only at this post a small detachment, such as there always has been, which will receive orders not to pass the river.

In order that there may be in future on this point, and some others which may occur, no cause to create the least displeasure, the assistant inspector Don Francisco Viana, second in command, will pass over to treat with your excellency, and on his return I will transmit your excellency's letter to colonel Antonio Cordero.

I avail myself of this occasion to offer my respects to your excellency, praying God to preserve your life for many years.

(Signed) SIMON HERRARA.

P. S. At day break to-morrow (the 6th instant) I shall leave this camp with the first division of the troops under my command, of which I advise your excellency for the purpose of information.

HERRARA.

His excellency James Wilkinson.

(No. 63.)

NATCHITOCHEs, August 5th, 1806.

SIR,

IT has been reported to me for several days past, that a large body of the troops of the king of Spain had assembled near the Sabine, and were about to cross that river; and I am just informed that this body has crossed the said river, and taken post within the territory of the United States. It has therefore become my duty to address you on this subject, to demand an explicit avowal of the object of this movement, to insist on this body of troops being immediately withdrawn, and to warn you of the consequences which may result from its continuance within the territory of the United States.

It is well known that the government of the United States, and the king of Spain, are at this moment negotiating on the subject of the boundaries of Louisiana; and there cannot be a doubt, but an amicable adjustment of existing differences will soon take place.

The reinforcements which have lately reached this post, are only intended as a security to the territory actually surrendered to us, and which we consider as extending to the Sabine. There is no disposition on the part of the United States to commit hostilities on the troops or possessions of Spain: but we cannot suffer aggressions on our territory, and should you persist in making them, you will be justly chargeable with all the consequences which such conduct is calculated to produce. I have only to add, that, if you should think proper to remove the Spanish troops to the west side of the Sabine, and continue them there, no attempt will be made on the part of the United States, to interrupt that friendship and harmony which ought to subsist between neighbouring nations: but if you should attempt to continue these troops within the territory of the United States, after this

explicit and friendly warning, it will be my duty to consider you as an invader of our territory, and to act accordingly.

This letter will be handed to you by major Moses Porter, of the artillerists of the United States, who will wait a reasonable time for your reply, which, if convenient, I hope may be accompanied by an English or French translation, to enable me to ascertain its contents with greater certainty. The major will be attended by one non-commissioned officer, and one private soldier of the army of the United States.

I avail myself of this opportunity of tendering my best wishes for your health, happiness and honor,

And am, sir,

With respectful consideration,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) THOMAS CUSHING,

*Colonel commanding a detachment of the
army of the United States.*

*To colonel Herrera, or officer commanding the troops
of the king of Spain, on the east side of the Sabine.*

(No. 64.)

ABITACION DE MR. PRUDON, 6e de Agosto, de 1806.

SENOR,

MUY señor mio de todo mi respecto: contesto la de V. S. del dia de ayer que en este parafe me ha entregado Moses Porter, mayer de artilleria de las tropas de los Estados Hunidos.

Es positibo que he pasado el Rio de las Sabinas con un cuerpo de tropas del rey mi señor, con ordenes del cap. general de qui en dependo, de resguardar este territorio de toda Ostilidad como perteneciente des de tiempo immemorial al rey, y siempre dependiente del govierno de la Provincia de Texas, pues aun en la actualidad los abitantes de el son y sobstienen la obediencia de mi govierno; no obstante la biolencia que las tropas de los Estados Hunidos cometieron sobre un pequeno des tacamento del rey.

Des de luego soy y me *constituyo* responsable al cumplimiento de las ordenes que me gobiernan, y son de no interrumpir ni que brantar par pretesto alguno la buena harmonia que hay entre S. M. y los Estados Hunidos; pero no permittire sin cumplir con mi obligacion se le defrande el terreno que posee. Si V. S. lo que brantase sera el unico responsable a las dos Cortes. Interrumpira los combenios amistosos que puedan estarse tratando de que no tengo conocimiento alguno.

No remito a V. S. la translacion de este en el Idioma Frances, o Ingles, por que no tengo persona de qui en la lerne capar de acerto con la pureza que corresponde en asumpto de tanta grabadad.

Ecelebrado esta ocasion por la satisfaccion que me proporciona de ofrecermo a V. S. para que me emplee en su obsequio.

B. Mo. A. V. S. suto. sego. sorvdr.

(Signed)

SIMON DE HERRARA.

*Senor coronel D. Tomas Cushing, commandante
de un destacamto. del exercito de los Estados
Unidos.*

(No. 65.)

NATCHITOCHES, August 26th, 1806.

SIR,

ON my arrival at this post, I learned with certainty, that a considerable Spanish force had crossed the Sabine, and advanced within the territory claimed by the United States.

It was hoped, sir, that pending the negotiations between our respective governments for an amicable adjustment of the limits of Louisiana, that no additional settlements would be formed, or new military positions assumed by either power, within the disputed territory; a policy which a conciliatory disposition would have suggested, and justice sanctioned;—but since a contrary conduct has been observed on the part of certain officers of his catholic majesty, they alone will be answerable for the consequences which may ensue.

The above proceeding, sir, is not the only evidence of an unfriendly disposition which certain officers of Spain have afforded. I have to complain of the outrage lately committed by a detachment of Spanish troops acting under your instructions, towards Mr. Freeman and his party, who were ascending the Red River under the orders of the president of the United States. Mr. Freeman and his associates were navigating waters which pass through the territory ceded to the United States; they were navigating a river on which the French had formerly made settlements far beyond the place where they were arrested; a fact of great notoriety, and in support of which, the testimony of several citizens residing at and near the post of Natchitoches, can be adduced. But nevertheless, Mr. Freeman and his party were assailed by a battallion of Spanish troops and commanded to return; a proceeding the more exceptionable, since the objects of Mr. Freeman were merely scientific, having in view nothing hos-

tile to Spain: objects which were long since communicated by me to his excellency the marquis of Casa Calvo, and which through him, I presume, must have been made known to the governor general of the province of Texas.

This detachment of Spanish troops, whose movements I learn, are directed by your excellency, did, on their march, commit another outrage towards the United States, and of which it is my duty to ask an explanation. In the Caddo nation of Indians, the flag of the United States was displayed, and commanded from the chief and warriors, all the respectful veneration to which it is entitled; but your troops are stated to have cut down the staff on which the pavilion waved, and to have menaced the peace and safety of the Caddos, should they continue their respect for the American government, or their friendly intercourse with the citizens of the United States.

I experience the more difficulty in accounting for this transaction, since it cannot be unknown to your excellency, that while Louisiana appertained to France, that the Caddo Indians were under the protection of the French government, and that a French garrison was actually established in one of their villages. Hence it follows, sir, that the cession of Louisiana to the United States, "with the same extent which it had when France possessed it," is sufficient authority for the display of the American flag in the Caddo village, and that the disrespect which that flag has experienced, subjects your excellency to a serious responsibility.

I am unwilling to render this communication unnecessarily lengthy, but I must complain of another outrage, which has been committed under the eyes of your excellency. Three citizens of the United States, of the names of Shaw, Irvin, and Brewster, were seized by Spanish soldiers, within twelve miles of Natchitoches, and have been sent prisoners to Nacogdoches. I cannot suppose that this proceeding is unknown to your excellency, and I should be wanting in duty, did I not avail myself of the present occasion, to demand information as to the cause of their arrest and detention.

There is still another subject on which I must address your excellency: it is reported to me that several slaves, the property of citizens of the United States, have lately escaped from the service of their masters, and sought and found an asylum at Nacogdoches. I have seen the correspondence between your excellency and judge Turner upon this subject, and I learn your determination to await the order of the governor general of the province of Texas; I will forbear, therefore, for the present, to press their immediate delivery

to the order of their masters, but I must urge your excellency to discourage for the future, the escape of slaves from this to your territory, and I request, that such as may repair to the bounds of your command, may be forthwith returned. Your excellency will readily perceive the cause of my solicitude on this subject. If fugitive slaves are to receive the protection of the Spanish authorities, the property of the citizens of this territory is indeed insecure, and a good understanding between our two governments ought not, and cannot be preserved. During the last year, I had a correspondence with his excellency the marquis of Casa Calvo (who was then at New-Orleans) relative to some negroes who had escaped to Nacogdoches, and in consequence of the interference of the marquis, I am led to believe that they were restored. I was since officially informed by the marquis, that his conduct on that occasion was approved by his catholic majesty, and I consequently concluded that the mischief was at an end.

It cannot, I presume, be unknown to the officers of his catholic majesty, that ministers from the United States have repaired to Spain for the avowed purpose of amicably adjusting the existing differences; I should greatly regret, therefore, if any occurrences in this quarter should prevent that amicable arrangement which the interest of each nation would advise. But if the officers of Spain should persist in their acts of aggression, your excellency will readily anticipate the consequences; and if the sword must be drawn, let those be responsible whose unfriendly conduct has rendered it indispensable.

Col. Henry Hopkins, the adjutant general of the militia of this territory, will have the honor to deliver to your excellency this communication, and to await your answer.

I tender to your excellency the assurances of my great respect and high consideration.

(Signed) WILLIAM C. C. CLAIBORNE.

*His excellency governor Herrera, or the officer
commanding a detachment of Spanish troops,
at or near the settlement of Bayou Pierre.*

(No. 66.)

SPANISH CAMP, August 28th, 1806.

SIR,

THE troops of the king, my master, which I have the honor to command, on this side of the Sabine, have no other

object but to maintain good harmony between the United States and his majesty, and to preserve inviolate the territory which belongs to him.

Major Freeman was navigating the Red River on that part of the territory which never belonged to the province of Louisiana, now appertaining to the United States: for which reason he was notified by the commandant of the troops to retrograde as far back as the country that did belong to them. I agree with your excellency, that all the territory which his catholic majesty ceded to France, belongs to the United States; but the Caddo Indians are not on that land, but at a great distance from it, and live now on the territory of Spain: for which reason it was notified to them, that if they chose to live under the government of the United States, they must go to the territory under their jurisdiction; but if they desired to remain where they then were, it was required of them to take down the American flag. They consented not to abandon their village; but being more tardy than was conceived they might have been, in pulling down the flag, they (the Spaniards) were obliged to do it by force.

The reason why I detained the three citizens of the United States, was because they were found twice, and on different days, observing our positions and movements, and three several times that I questioned them, I observed they did not agree as to the motives of their visiting this place; but finally one of them told me, that they wished to establish themselves under the government of the king, at St. Antoine; which determined me to send them to the governor of the province with an escort, as well on account of the distance of the road, as for having rendered themselves suspected persons. The detention of the runaway negroes of Louisiana, at Nacogdoches, is an affair now in suspense before the captain general of this province, who likewise will have knowledge of the motives why those were sent back whom your excellency cited. And for the better security of the matter, I shall send your letter which I received by colonel Hopkins, and who likewise will be the bearer of this.

The troops of the king, neither from disposition nor character, will ever co-operate directly or indirectly in encouraging the emigration of negro slaves. For my part, I assure your excellency that those I command will commit no hostility which can frustrate the negotiations which are now pending between our courts; but if I am provoked to it, I shall endeavor to preserve the honor of my troops and to fulfil the obligations

with which I am invested ; a duty which my character, and that of my subalterns demands.

I avail myself of this opportunity to offer your excellency my respect and consideration.

(Signed) SIMON DE HERRARA.

To his excellency governor William C. C. Claiborne.

(No. 67.)

FORT ADAMS, *September 12th, 1806.*

SIR,

I HAVE just received your letter of the 4th inst. which requires no specific reply.

On the receipt of this you are without a moment's delay, to dispatch for Natchitoches in the most expeditious and least expensive manner, all the swords and pistols which have arrived at New-Orleans for public service, with tents for 1200 men, completely officered, if you have as many in your possession. If you have a marque, I beg it may be sent up for my use. It is of high importance the most vigorous exertion should be made in this instance, and I think the superintendency should be confided to an officer of approved industry.

The secretary of war has informed me, three months since, that nine gun-boats were ordered to the Mississippi, for the defence of that river and coast. If my arrangements for the protectionary defence of the country, are to be extended to our flotilla, you will be pleased to direct three of these boats to enter Lake Pontchartrain, and to guard all the inlets into that lake, which will effectually prevent any hostile approach from that quarter.

It is my opinion you should push the repair of Fort St. Philip, and put it in as formidable a position as possible ; but with regard to the *block house*, you must suspend your operations until you see or hear further from me. The Pascagola will not afford even a devious route to the Tombigby ; four feet water is barely carried over the bar, and you have then a rapid current for more than an hundred miles, and at last find a landing in a wilderness far removed from the Tombigby.

I am proceeding post to Natchitoches, from whence "entre nous" we shall march once more against our enemy, should colonel Herrera refuse my mandate to return to the westward of the Sabine ; and if the Spaniard possesses a drop of true Castilian blood, he will not recede from his avowed orders and solemn determination. If in your power, I wish

you to send sixty select men with three of your best officers, to Point Coupée, under the ostensible idea of their being ordered to Natchitoches, and instruct the commandant to hold himself in constant readiness for an enterprize.

If this party should reach Point Coupée by the 24th inst. it will be in season. But the real design must be held in profound reserve. Urge the contractor's agent to throw flour into Fort Stoddart; we shall have occasion there for 500 rations per day, should hostilities commence in this quarter.

The officer must have no hint of the contents of this letter; let him be ready, and hold his tongue, that's all. Send forward the hospital stores and medicine for this place to Natchitoches. The troops are dying for them.

With respect, I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant.

JA: WILKINSON.

N. B. Should the Spaniards do as I desire, I will be with you in ten or twelve days.

*Licutenant colonel Freeman,
commanding at New-Orleans.*

(No. 68.)

NATCHITOCHES, *October 12th, 1806.*

SIR,

I ARRIVED here on the 22d, and dispatched a letter by colonel Cushing to governor Cordero, at Nacogdoches, on the 24th ultimo. The colonel was well received by an accomplished gentleman, and returned with his answer late on the evening of the 2d instant, in which he barely acknowledged the receipt of my letter, observing it was not in his power to enter upon a discussion of the important points on which I had addressed him, but should transmit my letter to his superior, the captain general of the province, Nemesio Salcedo; and I understand from him verbally that an answer may be expected about the 24th instant.

On the 27th ultimo, Herrera raised his camp at Bayou Pierre, and his troops traversed the country until they intersected the highway from this place to Nacogdoches, about twenty-six miles in my front; which they pursued to the Sabine River, and crossed it on the 30th at the lower ford, where they took post and were yesterday encamped, under his immediate command.

The temperate style of governor Cordero's answer, his reference of my letter to the captain general, the retrograde of his troops and the knowledge I have acquired of his actual force, determined me to remand the militia of this and the adjacent territory, except about one hundred dragoons and mounted gun-men; but as he stands on the verge of our limits in military array, patrols our territory daily, and has not retracted the pretensions avowed by governor Herrera, or acknowledged our jurisdiction; I have warned him that I shall in a few days (the moment the necessary preparations can be accomplished) advance to the Sabine, with no hostile intentions against the troops or realms of Spain, but to assert the jurisdiction of the United States.

I feel that this demonstration is essential to the vindication of our national honor, and the assertion of our rights; and it will certainly test the pride, spirit, and pretensions of our opponents. It is difficult to conjecture what may be the result, but if the territory is not ceded by treaty, the Dons, after what has passed, must either contend for it or be disgraced in the eyes of the world; and my own conduct will be regulated entirely by theirs. I shall not cross the Sabine unless they should oblige me (by violating our territory) to drive them over it, in which case I shall be governed by circumstances and events.

Your militia from Apalouza mustered 105, from Rapide 161, and Wachita 33, and Dr. Sibley turned out about 40.—You will perceive my ideas of the spirit and force of your settlements were correct.

I have sent these good citizens home with content; have applauded their patriotism, and begged of them to be ready for a future call; and *I must pray you, sir, to have the whole strength of your territory in as alert a state as possible*; because, should the Spaniards determine to sustain their jurisdiction to the Arroyo Hondo, and our negotiations with Spain, should either fail or be unseasonably protracted, a strong force accelerated on horseback, will be pressed forward to this frontier; and although I shall beat any thing they can bring against me immediately, I may not be able to meet the shock of thousands opposed to hundreds.

I have just received under cover from governor Cordero, the enclosed, with a long answer from Salcedo, in reply to your letter written Herrera, in which he has discussed at large, and with some ability, the merits of the exceptions which you took to the conduct of his officers; **substantially* he as-

* *An hundred instances may be shewn where Wilkinson applies this word to express "in substance."*

serts the Arroyo Hondo to be the established and notorious boundary between Louisiana and Texas; denies our right to the country of the Cados; charges Mr. Freeman's expedition with the violation of the rights of nations; justifies the sending him back; agrees to return negroes on the ground set forth by Cordero, and proposes to return Shaw and his associates.

I shall send the original to the executive of the United States, and will transmit you a copy so soon as it is made out.

I have received your several letters from Appalouza, and have found major King as he always was, and col. Thompson as you describe him. The disaffection of.....seems invincible, nor can I make them believe we shall advance, though they are daily spectators of our preparations. No aid can be had of them voluntarily; for no price will they engage to lead a mule or drive an ox: yet I trust we shall be able to work a reform, and perhaps the publication of your correspondence may favor the effect; at any rate, I can see no impropriety in the step, should you consider the grounds you have taken tenable against the CAVILLERS.

I expect to find Cordero at the Sabine, with his collected force.—No matter—should he venture over, I will accompany him to Nacogdoches, and visit the *bull fight*.

Health and prosperity attend you,

(Signed) JA: WILKINSON.

His excellency governor Claiborne.

(No. 69.)

NATCHITOCHES, *October 20th, 1806.*

SIR,

THE following information appears to rest on such broad and explicit grounds, as to exclude all doubt of its authenticity.

A numerous and powerful association, extending from New-York through the Western States, to the territory bordering on the Mississippi, has been formed with the design to levy and rendezvous eight or ten thousand men in New-Orleans, at a very near period: and from thence, with the co-operation of a naval armament, to carry an expedition against Vera Cruz.

Agents from Mexico, who were in Philadelphia in the beginning of August, are engaged in this enterprize. These persons have given assurances that the landing of the pro-

posed expedition, will be seconded by so general an insurrection, as to insure the subversion of the present government, and silence all opposition in three or four weeks. A body of the associates is to descend the Allegany River, and the first general rendezvous will be held near the Rapids of the Ohio, on or before the 20th of next month; from whence this corps is to proceed in light boats, with the utmost possible velocity for the city of New Orleans, under the expectation of being joined in their route, by auxiliaries from the State of Tennessee and other quarters.

It is unknown under what authority this enterprize has been projected; from whence the means of its support are derived, or what may be the intentions of its leaders, in relation to the territory of Orleans; but it is believed that the maritime co-operation will depend on a British squadron from the West-Indies, under the ostensible command of American masters.

Active influential characters have been engaged in these transactions for six or eight months past, and their preparations are reported to be in such a state of maturity, that it is expected the van will reach New-Orleans in December, where the necessary organization and equipment are to be completed with promptitude, and it is proposed that the expedition should sail for Vera Cruz about the first of February.

This information has recently reached the reporter through several channels so direct and confidential, that he cannot doubt the facts set forth; and therefore, he considers it his duty, to make this representation to the executive by a courier extraordinary, to whom he has furnished five hundred dollars; being persuaded, should it prove unfounded, his precaution will be justified, and that otherwise, his vigilance will be applauded.

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,
President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 70.)

NATCHITOCHES, *October 21st, 1806.*

(CONFIDENTIAL.)

SIR,

WHATEVER may be the general impropriety, I persuade myself, that on a subject irrelative to my official obligations, I shall be excused for addressing you directly and

confidentially ; but I have another and a more cogent reason, for deviating in this instance, from the ordinary course of my correspondence. It is possible the momentous occasion of this letter, and the vital importance attached to it, may have excited solitudes to beguile my understanding, and delude my judgment, and in such case I trust the integrity of the intention, will secure me your confidence ; and that this letter, with the communication it covers, may find their graves in your breast. For although my information appears too direct and circumstantial to be fictitious, yet the magnitude of the enterprize, the desperation of the plan, and the stupendous consequence with which it seems pregnant, stagger my belief, and excite doubts of the reality, against the conviction of my senses ; and it is for this reason, I shall forbear to commit names, because it is my desire to avert a great public calamity, and not to mar a salutary design, or to injure any one undeservedly. I have never, in my whole life, found myself under such circumstances of perplexity and embarrassment, as at present, for I am not only uninformed of the prime mover and ultimate objects of this daring enterprize, but am ignorant of the foundation on which it rests, of the means by which it is to be supported, and whether any immediate or collateral protection, internal, or external is expected. Among other allurements proposed to me, I am informed you connive at the combination, and that our country will justify it ; but when I examine my orders of the 6th May, I am obliged to discredit these imputations. But should this association be formed in opposition to the laws, and in defiance of government, then I have no doubt that the revolt of this territory will be made an auxiliary step to the main design of attacking Mexico, to give it a new master in the place of promised liberty. Could the fact be ascertained to me, I believe I should hazard my discretion, make the best compromise I could with Salcedo in my power, and throw myself with my little band into New-Orleans, to be ready to defend that capital against usurpation and violence. It is true, the works of the place have mouldered to ruin, yet I think it may, by extraordinary exertions, in a few weeks be rendered defensible against an undisciplined rabble, acting in a bad cause ; but, sir, with my instructions before me, and without evidence of the design, principle, or support of the corps of associates expected from the Ohio, I dare not turn my back on the Spaniards, now in my front, and abandon this scene of disaffection to the certain evils, which without some strong measures of prevention, may possibly accrue in New-Orleans.

If it should be found necessary to the preservation of exterior engagements or internal security, or to the support of the laws and government, to oppose the meditated movements from the Ohio, I would recommend the immediate adoption of the following measures:—viz. 1st. The troops from the Bank of the Missouri, from St. Vincent's, South West Point, and Massac, to take post at the Iron Banks on the Mississippi, about fifteen miles below the mouth of the Ohio, with the artillery at those posts, and orders to prevent the passage of persons or property down the river, except under such passports as you may think proper to prescribe. I prefer the Iron Banks, because the river at that point is confined to a narrow bed, and may be effectually commanded; and I would recommend captain Daniel Bissell, now at Massac, for the command. 2dly. A squadron of sloops of war and gun-boats, should be ordered to take possession of the mouth of the Mississippi within the bar, to prevent the entrance of all armed vessels and transports, unless particularly licensed by government.

3dly. A competent regular force should be levied and organised to pursue the outlaws, to shut them up, and compel them to surrender at discretion.

By the first step it would be proposed to cut off supplies of provisions, and prevent the junction of auxiliaries from the sources of insurrection. By the second, to destroy every hope and expectation founded on co-operation of maritime force; and the third speaks too plainly for itself to need explanation.

Amidst the uncertainty and doubts which perplex me, I feel disposed to adopt the following conclusion:—Should the conduct of the Spaniards in my front justify it, I shall take the precaution either to go myself, or to send colonel Cushing to New-Orleans, with every man who may be safely detached from this point, in order to put the works of the forts St. Charles and St. Lewis, in the best possible state of defence time and things may enable me, and to secure the cannon, arms, military stores and other public property, against any lawless attempt by whomsoever made.

If the designs of the combination should be pointed against the government, our communication by mail will be cut off, and all doubtful characters travelling from this quarter towards the Atlantic, will be stopped. I have therefore judged it expedient, to silence suspicion and to secure and accelerate the arrival of this despatch to your hands, to cause the bearer, lieutenant Thomas A. Smith, a young officer of good promise and entire trust, ostensibly to resign his commis-

sion and quit the service. It is therefore necessary you should instruct the Secretary of War to reject his resignation and continue him on the rolls. And I hope, sir, should he acquit himself with satisfactory discretion and promptitude, on the journey he has undertaken, that you may give him some mark of your approbation and send him back to me. Reposing with entire confidence in your justice and your wisdom, that no application will be made of this letter which the national interests do not exact, I hold myself ready to receive and execute your orders, when and where you may think proper to direct;

And am, sir,

Your faithful and obliged
soldier and servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,

President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 71.)

Extract of a letter from James L. Donaldson, Esq. dated

NATCHEZ, October 31st, 1807.

MICHAEL MYERS arrived here to-day, in fifteen days from St. Louis, on his way to New-Orleans. He made a communication to me, with permission to transmit it to you, which might stagger even credulity. Of his information *he says he is certain*, and most firmly believes in the intelligence he communicates. This is neither more nor less, than that a plan to revolutionize the Western country, has been formed, matured, and is ready to explode—that Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Orleans, and Indiana, are combined to declare themselves independent on the 15th November—that proposals have been made to some of the most influential characters at St. Louis, by an accredited agent of the conspiracy, to join in the plan—that this person,* whose name Myers refuses to reveal, is in a most respectable line of life, and has the most unquestionable vouchers of his mission in French and English—that he declared, if money was neces-

* *Wilkinson holds the written communications of this respectable foreigner, who abandoned Burr after he returned to Kentucky from St. Louis.*

sary, that it might be commanded to any extent. It is proper to add, that the persons* thus applied to at St. Louis, altogether refused to concur in any plan of the kind, saying that it should be only superior force that should dispense with their oath of fidelity to the United States. This may all appear to a person as well acquainted as you are with the politics of the Western country, as a *second Spanish conspiracy*, and as such be ridiculed, and such is my impression of this wonderful plan; but Myers so firmly believes it, that having set forth on his journey by land, to the United States, he was induced by his fears, hastily to return to arrange his business at all events, and prepare for an explosion. He most solemnly protests to the truth of the communication, and declares there are only four persons in St. Louis who are privy to the disclosure made by the secret agent. It is not improbable that this may be a *ruse de guerre*, a stratagem set on foot by the patrons of the "Western World," to foster and keep alive the dissention which if excited by the pretended exposition of ancient conspiracies, may be fanned into a flame by spreading an alarm of an immediate and pressing treasonable combination. This I am apt to believe is the case, and in order more fully to succeed, they may study and affect mystery, as better calculated to excite suspicion, and that they may have the honor of a *new discovery*. However, be the matter as it may, I communicate it to you as I received it, and have only to regret, that you had not in person, from Myers, information, of which, whatever your judgment might pronounce, the solemnity of his assertion, and his certainty of the plan (although he was not at liberty to divulge the means) must have staggered the mind *capable of believing it*.

Gen. Wilkinson.

(No. 72.)

Copy of a letter from general Wilkinson to the president of the United States, dated seat of major Minor near Natchez, November 12, 1806.

(CONFIDENTIAL.)

SIR,

I AGAIN intrude upon you the subject of the duplicate under cover, which presents a spectacle of human depravity, to excite our sorrow, indignation and abhorrence.

Many circumstances have intervened since my last, con-

* Colonel August Choteau was the principal.

firmatory of the information previously received, and demonstrative of a deep, dark and wicked conspiracy. *My doubts have ceased*, and it is my opinion, that nought but an immediate peace in Europe can prevent an explosion which may desolate these settlements, inflict a deep wound on our republican policies, involve us in a foreign conflict, and shake the government to its very foundation.

I received from a correct source the information under cover at Natchitoches on the 6th instant, and make no question of the facts, though I trust the report of the agent alluded to was a mere "*ruse de guerre*" to popularise and gain auxiliaries to the real design—"to seize on New Orleans, revolutionise the territory, and carry an expedition against Mexico, by Vera Cruz." This is indeed a deep, dark and wide-spread conspiracy, embracing the young and the old—the democrat and the federalist—the native and the foreigner—the patriot of '76 and the exotic of yesterday—the opulent and the needy—the ins and the outs; and I fear it will receive strong support in New Orleans, from a quarter little suspected, from whence I have been recently addressed by a Gallo-American, formerly distinguished at Olmutz in a better cause. By masking my purposes and flattering his hopes, I expect to discover the extent and leading characters of the combination in that city; and till this is effected, I shall carry an equivocal exterior to every person who may see me, excepting my confidential officers.

My letter to the Secretary of War will expose to you my military movements and intentions, which may I hope meet your approbation; and I intreat that you may be pleased to order him to honor the drafts which may be made on him, for materials and other disbursements essential to the fortifying the city of New Orleans, to enable me to defend it, to repulse the assailants, and command the pass of the river.

You will perceive on enquiry that my means are greatly deficient, but may rest satisfied that nothing shall be omitted which can be accomplished by indefatigable industry, incessant vigilance and hardy courage; and I gasconade not when I tell you, that in such a cause, I shall glory to give my life to the service of my country; for I verily believe such an event to be probable; because, should seven thousand men descend from the Ohio, and this is the calculation, they will bring with them the sympathies and good wishes of that country, and none but friends can be afterwards prevailed on to follow them; with my handful of veterans, however gallant, it is improbable I shall be able to withstand such a dis-

parity of numbers; and it would seem we must be sacrificed unless you should be able to succour me seasonably by sea, with two thousand men and a naval armament, to command the mouth of the Mississippi.

To give effect to my military arrangements, it is absolutely indispensable New Orleans and its environs should be placed under martial law; for without this, the disaffected can neither be apprehended nor banished—private property can neither be appropriated nor occupied for public purposes—the indiscriminate intercourse between town and country cannot be restrained, and my every disposition will of course be hourly and daily exposed to my adversaries. To effect this necessary measure, I must look up to your influence and authority; to insure the triumph of government over its enemies, I am obliged to resort to political finesse and military stratagem. I must hold out false colours, conceal my designs, and cheat my adversaries into a state of security, that when I do strike it may be with more force and effect; and therefore my own bosom, were it possible, should be the sole repository of my determinations. But independent of considerations of policy, my personal safety will require the most profound reserve, to the last moment of indecision; for were my intentions exposed, there are more than three desperate enthusiasts in New Orleans, who would seek my life, and although I may be able to smile at danger in open conflict, I will confess I dread the stroke of the assassin, because it cannot confer an honorable death.

Having put the front of the troops in motion for New Orleans under major Porter, and made arrangements for the rest to follow under colonel Cushing, I left Natchitoches on the 7th instant, and arrived here the 11th, to pick up what intelligence I could of the doings above; to sound the public mind, to require a body of militia from the governor, and above all to find some intelligent confidential agent who would convey this despatch to you, with certain oral communications which I dare not letter, because nothing less than an overt act will in my judgment warrant the official commitment of names, and none such has as yet been committed within my knowledge.

Mr. Briggs, with whose good sense and integrity I have been long acquainted, is the only person to whom I could venture to confide the important commission; and he, at my pressing instance, under the assurance I have ventured to make him of your approbation, has agreed to absent himself from his office, under some feigned pretext, and to hand this to you; and to guard against the loss of life or limb, and the

casualties of disease, I have associated an attendant with him, who will proceed with my packet in case any accident should happen to Mr. Briggs.

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,
President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 73.)

NEW ORLEANS, November 28th, 1806.

SIR,

Governor Claiborne appears to be properly impressed by the awful crisis which awaits us, and promises every support in his power. The troops are behind me still, and the rainy season has commenced. My difficulties are stupendous—my means to be provided—my time short, and the occasion urgent and critical. But a good cause—the favor of heaven—willing hands and patriotic hearts may work wonders. I am projecting a plan to take.....and... ..at Natchez. I doubt the success, but will make the attempt. In obedience to obligations of good faith, and to exculpate you from any participation in the lawless enterprize, I shall warn the governor of Pensacola of the meditated blow against Baton Rouge.

.....has been here, and it is suspected he went to Tennessee, and it is believed also that.....has been tampered with. Bollman is here and I will manage him.

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,
President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 74.)

SIR,

BURR had a contract with of Pittsburgh, or a company with which he was concerned, for 20,000 barrels of flour, and 6,000 barrels of pork, deliverable here, or at Natchez. It was to follow Burr, and I understand he made a handsome advance on the contract. Since the exposition,

..... has sent orders to Natchez to have these provisions taken care of, and not to deliver them before payment.

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,

President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 75.)

NEW ORLEANS, *December 9th, 1806.*

SIR,

I MUST trust to the peculiar delicacy and difficulty of my situation, for the motive and the cause of this third intrusion on the same momentous subject. Between the alternatives of waiting for instructions from the proper department, (whose last orders to me, bear date the 9th of June,) until from the feeble and defenceless condition in which I find this place, the enemy should gain the portal and put the bayonet to my breast; or, taking all upon myself, and at my single hazard, and my own discretion preparing to support the government and constitution of my country, against the attempts which the frenzy of the licentious band at the Ohio rendezvous may undertake, by putting this place in a posture of defence at the expense of large sums; *I have reflected, paused, doubted and at length determined.* My situation is indeed a hard one. On the one side, although the intentions of the insurgents are unquestionable, yet a thousand casualties, beyond human foresight, and out of the reach of human actions, may frustrate their enterprize. The elements, timely apprehension, conscious guilt, the fickleness of man's nature, the arm of government, the sudden death of a leader, together with a multitude of other causes, may impede their march, and perhaps dissipate their resolution. If from some one, or many of such causes, the enterprize should be abandoned, the sound precautions taken here for defence and resistance, might be branded as inexpedient and unnecessary, and the mover, who had nothing in view but the salvation of his country, be stigmatized with the charge of an idle and extravagant waste of the public treasure. On the other hand, should the intentions of the conspirators be carried into execution, and for want of the common means of military defence, this city, of incalculable importance in the present crisis, fall an easy sacrifice; the commander who had failed from the scruples of delicacy or the fear of responsibility to call into execution the means of defence, might be

justly charged with ignorance and apathy, or, on strong grounds of probability, be suspected of collusion. After carefully weighing the subject, and maturely reflecting on these opposite lines of conduct, and their consequences, my doubts are at an end: the evils which may result from a discretionary appropriation of funds are temporary, those which spring out of a supine indifference in the hour of danger may be irretrievable; the sums which my plan of defence may draw from the treasury can be replaced, but what remedy is there against triumphant rebellion? Fallibility of judgment involves no criminality, but the stain is indelible which proceeds from duty neglected in a moment of pressing public danger.

My course of conduct has been determined by these reflections, and I have resolved to spare no expense, which, under a sound economy may be found necessary to the fortification and defence of this place, and to impede, harass and effectually oppose every unlicensed armed body, which may attempt to approach it from within or without.

I have just received information from an* associate of the unlawful combination on the Ohio, that colonel Burr has transmitted advice to this city, bearing date the 30th October, in which he gives assurances that he will be at Natchez, the 20th instant, with 2000 men, and that 4000 more would immediately follow him. He observes, that he could readily have raised 12,000, but did not think it necessary; and adds, that he intended to remain at Natchez, until he could receive letters from this place. He still implicitly and blindly confides in my co-operation. But the deception will last a few days longer only, as I shall be under the necessity of spreading an alarm among the confederates, by the arrest of their agents, spies and associates here, against whom I shall either have positive proof or strong grounds of suspicion, and it is my intention to send them by water to the seat of government. For the apprehension and securing the persons of those engaged in this destructive project, the full exertion of military authority, subject to a dread responsibility is absolutely necessary; and under the awful sense and most perfect conviction, that nothing short of a suspension of the regular administration of justice, and converting the town and precincts into a regular garrison, subject to the law martial could give efficacy to my measures, and prevent the enemy without from the comfort, aid and co-operation of the enemy within; I addressed to governor Claiborne a let-

* *Doctor Bollman.*

ter of which you have a copy under cover, with his answer, which unfortunately blasts my hopes, and will in a great degree baffle my designs; for I dare not exert my authority before the danger becomes obvious and imperious, and then it may be too late; yet sir, you may rest content, that nothing shall remain undone which I can accomplish, shackled as I am by obstacles, impediments and deficient powers.

It is with inexpressible mortification and regret, that I discharge the painful duty of informing you, that amongst our own countrymen in this city, I have discovered characters who had hitherto been distinguished for probity and patriotism, men of high talents and entire trust, honored by your confidence, and distinguished by the marks of your regard; who, if not connected with this flagitious plan, by active co-operation, have withheld from government interesting and timely intelligence of its gradual completion, or have dared openly to approve it. Shall I mention their names? I forbear until strong suspicion be confirmed into certainty; and let me not abandon the hope, their eyes may be opened to the foulness of the attempt, and that they may be still retrieved to their country. Over such I shall keep a strict eye, and preventing their co-operation in mischief, I shall rejoice should this conduct reclaim their minds from error, and secure their utility to the cause of the constitution.

But it is with a proud satisfaction, which swells my heart, that I contrast with this partial defection of our own countrymen, the general temper of the great mass of the people, who are ardent for the defence of their city; and will, I think, in this instance, be found true to their God, to themselves, their country, and its constitution.

I have projected a plan to apprehend Burr and Dayton at Natchez, as you will perceive from the inclosed instructions; but this will be marred, I fear, by a communication which governor Claiborne has, contrary to my judgment, made to Mr. Mead, of the Mississippi Territory, and which, by exciting some idle gasconade from that vain young man, may subject the feeble establishments of the territory to be pillaged by Burr's renegadoes, and perhaps destroyed by their slaves; for it is natural to the desperate to mark for destruction all who may oppose them.

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,

President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 76.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *December 9th*, 1806.

SIR,

ACCOMPANIED by governor Claiborne, I, a few minutes since, met the merchants of the city, and in a short address, to which my sensibilities gave direction, I explained to them the causes which had produced the assembly of the troops at this place, and the preparations which were making to fortify the town; painted to them in glowing colours, the impending dangers which menaced the city and territory, and threatened the sheet anchor of all our hopes. I explained the plans I contemplated for the safety of the country, and in default of my means to accomplish the end, I appealed to their fears, their hopes, their patriotism and their interests, for prompt co-operation in manning the armed flotilla destined to ascend the river.

The result of this interview is highly honorable to the body of merchants here, who have since requested the governor to embargo the port; have agreed to furnish three hundred sailors, and for raising and clothing them, have subscribed four thousand five hundred dollars.

Very much now depends on wind and weather. If the insurgents should be delayed, and the winds may enable us to anticipate them above the Yazou, a scene of horror will probably ensue; but the honor and the government of our country, will, I trust, be preserved, and the wretches who may escape the wilderness and regain their homes, will carry with them a radical cure for rebellious citizens. I look to heaven, to a just cause and energetic exertions, for a favorable result;

And am with perfect respect,

Your obliged and faithful

JA: WILKINSON.

*Thomas Jefferson,**President of the United States.*

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 77.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, *December 14th*, 1806.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to enclose you a copy of my last letter, by Mr. Donaldson, to which I hope you may be pleased

to consider this an appendage, so closely connected in order and relation, as to render their disjunction perplexing and improper. The very extraordinary occurrence which produced my first trespass on your attention, will, I trust, excuse the narrative of incidents which sprung out of it in quick succession.

After several consultations with the governor and judges, touching the arrest and confinement of certain known agents and emissaries of colonel Burr, in this city and territory, whose intrigues and machinations were to be apprehended; it is with their privity and approbation. that I have caused three of them to be arrested, viz. Doctor Erick Bollman, Samuel Swartwout, and Peter V. Ogden, against whom I possess strong facts; and I have recommended to the governor to have James Alexander, Esq. taken up on the grounds of strong suspicion.

These persons, and all others, who, by their characters and deportment, may be considered hostile to the interests of the United States, or dangerous to this feeble frontier, under the menacing aspect of things from above, will, if my influence here can prevail, be seized, and sent by sea to the United States, subject to the disposition of government, and accompanied by such information as may justify their confinement, and furnish a clue to the developement of the grounds, progress, and projectors of the treasonable enterprize in which they are engaged.

This letter will accompany doctor Boliman, to be this day embarked in a vessel bound for Charleston, under the charge of lieutenant Wilson, of the artillery, who has orders to land with his prisoner at fort Johnston or fort Moultrie, to forward this despatch by mail, and to wait the orders of the executive.

Mr. Swartwout will be sent to Baltimore, by a vessel which will sail some time the ensuing week, in custody of another subaltern, who will be the bearer of strong testimony against him and also colonel Burr; and the others will follow, under due precautions, by the earliest opportunities which may present.

By this procedure, we may intimidate the confederates, who are unquestionably numerous in this, as well as the adjacent territory, disconcert their arrangements, and possibly destroy their intrigues; and I hope the zeal which directs the measure, may be justified and approved; for whilst the glow of patriotism actuates my conduct, and I am willing to offer myself a martyr to the constitution of my country, I should indeed be most grievously disappointed did I incur its censure.

It appears highly consequential, that the deposition of Mr. M. Myers should be had, touching the facts set forth in the enclosed extract of a letter; for, could the agent therein referred to, be detected, important, though perhaps, melancholy information, might be extracted from him; for it appears obvious, from the occurrences and information of every day, that the seeds of systematic revolution have been liberally scattered from hence to the State of Ohio, and have taken such deep root, as to require the strong arm of the Union for their extinction.

Men in office, and of distinguished talents, affecting to deliver mere speculative opinions, have declared, in my presence, that the fire of revolution is too wide spread to be extinguished by the government; that it is to be found in the Atlantic as well as in the Western States; that Burr cannot be resisted; that he will progress; and that it is useless to fortify this place. Others inveigh publicly against the union of our Eastern and Western Establishments. It would require a volume to pourtray the various modes in which my affections, pride, spirit, patriotism, interests and ambition, have been insidiously assailed. Cæsar was a traitor, and is immortalized; general Washington a rebel, and stands eternalized in the volumes of fame; Bonaparte a usurper, before whom the nations of the earth bow down; fifty thousand dollars a year for my life, and the succession of the Western Empire secured to my youngest son. It is no wonder that weak minds should be deluded by such arts, particularly when the main ostensible objects are the emancipation of the enslaved Mexicans, and the possession of golden mountains.

The explosion which I was compelled to make on the 9th inst. to satisfy the impatience and remove the suspicions of the inhabitants, and more particularly to excite a spirit of patriotism in aid of my operations, has shut up every avenue of information; and therefore I must not expect to hear any thing more of Mr. Burr's covert movements or designs. The information of the 30th October, is the last I have received; but I am convinced his partizans expect his arrival at Natchez daily.

Do not be persuaded, sir, that the flame kindled by Burr, will be easily extinguished; it may be smothered for a moment, but will blaze forth again. The disease is too deep seated to be cured without strong alteratives; and we must operate with a strong, a bold, and a steady hand, or all will be lost. Here, sir, we find the key to the Western States, and here we must form our grand depository and place of arms; combine to this disposition, a river fleet competent to its

occlusion, and post it thirty or forty leagues above the Yazou river, and we may repose in security ; for the discontents and sufferings of our insurgent citizens, which must immediately ensue, will soon open their eyes to the wickedness of their leaders, and work a radical reformation without bloodshed.

This is my plan for resisting an internal attack ; for external defence, gun-boats and bomb ketches, with floating batteries at the mouth of the Mississippi, and the passes from Lake Pontchartrain, will be necessary.

I find I have no chance of acquiring competent authority here, to meet the impending extremity ; yet my exertions will be continued to the last moment of life.

(No. 78.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, December 18th, 1806.

SIR,

SINCE my last, of the 14th inst. writs of habeas corpus have issued for the bodies of Bollman, Swartwout, and Ogden ; the two latter by judge Workman, who is strongly suspected of being connected with Burr in his conspiracy ; I have proof this man declared some time since, that "the republican who possessed power, and did not employ it to establish a despotism, was a fool." His writ for Ogden was served on captain Shaw, of the navy, who had him in charge at my request, on board the *Ætna* bomb ketch, and delivered him up ; and Mr. Workman discharged him without giving me a word of information, although he knew he was confined by my order, for a treasonable combination with Burr—and Mr. Ogden now struts at large. Swartwout I have sent off, and shall so report, holding myself ready for consequences. Bollman was required by the superior court, but I have got rid of that affair also, under the usual liability for damages, in which I shall look to our country for protection.

After repeated experiments, I can say positively, I have nothing to expect from the civil authority, which does not depend on the broad letter and tardy course of the law ; and in the mean time treason stalks abroad, and the advocates of Burr and rebellion, ridicule our apprehensions and oppose our preparations for defence.

I know nothing of our relations with Spain, but if they are not well, we must keep an eye towards Natchitoches, at the same time that we guard this point. I speak of things possible, not probable; for indeed, sir, I begin to fear the revolutionary flame will consume us. The Spaniards are so extremely jealous, that Grandpré pays no regard to the information I find it my duty to give him of Burr's approach and intentions against Baton Rouge.

(No. 79.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, December 25th, 1806.

I NOW beg leave explicitly to state, that, having offered to judge Hall and judge Mathews, the 12th or 13th inst. all the testimony which I possessed against Burr and Bollman, to the end that the former might be proclaimed for apprehension, throughout the United States, and the latter might be committed to close confinement, to secure his testimony and prevent his correspondence and machinations, in aid of Burr's insurrection, the first was declined, specifically, on the ground that it might "be too late, as Burr might be on his way"—and the last was rejected, because the offence was bailable, and the writ of habeas corpus would put the prisoner at large; and after some reflection, judge Hall declared, "I believe it will be best for the general to exercise his discretion;" to which judge Mathews made no objection; and as the gentlemen left my chamber, I observed, "I hope you will not hang me for what I may do;" to which they both replied in the negative.

Governor Claiborne had assured me frequently, he was ready to share my responsibility. On my first arrival here, he promised me, he would suspend the writ of habeas corpus and declare martial law, if necessary; he at the moment felt himself authorized to do so, in any public extremity: he soon quit that ground, and has since assured me, he did not think he possessed the power, but that so soon as he was assured of Burr's landing at Natchez, he would adopt these measures. He assured me he would justify the seizure of Bollman, Swartwout, and Ogden, and explicitly advised the apprehending of the first, one hour only before it was done.

I conjure you, sir, and through you, sir, my country, to consider the difficulty, delicacy, and dangers of my situation,

operating at a thousand miles from the seat of government, *without orders, and on my own discretion.* I pray you to do justice to my motives, and to believe that I consider the integrity of the union and the constitution of our country, to be most seriously endangered; that I have staked my life in their support; and that I feel it to be my duty, without regard to forms or ordinances, to employ every means within my reach, to secure the end.

Finding that the civil authority would not hold Ogden in custody; and that the governor would not have Alexander apprehended; and knowing that these men were active and determined agents of Burr; I ordered them into confinement, and was immediately served with writs of habeas corpus, to bring them forthwith before judge Workman; to which I have made answers of the same cast with that offered in the case of Bollman, and they will soon follow Swartwout to some Atlantic port, to be disposed of as the government may think proper to direct.

I have considered it my duty, to transmit you the enclosed letter, addressed to the foreigner who is now engaged in taking a chart of this very important coast, of which I have before expressed my suspicions. A comparison of movements, dates, and circumstances, will shew you that Burr is the "new friend" spoken of, and also the companion "de voyage" of the writer from Louisville, who is the identical agent who visited St. Louis, as reported by Mr. Myers. The aide-de-camp of Charette, too, may be traced up. What a sad fellow must be: he has ruined and is now disgorging his villains upon us. I have said before, it is my opinion should be recalled; he came here with Bollman, Alexander, and Spence, brought letters from Burr to, and was his panegyrist in this city. The letters under cover, from..... and.....to Alexander, after his arrest, and after they were fully apprized in open court, of the causes which produced it, betray a warmth of sympathy and interest, which justify the suspicion of a common cause; and when character and merits are taken into consideration, were I authorized, I should put them out of the way of doing harm, by example, influence or intrigue.

The deposition of Mr. justice Hinds, implicates an officer of the army, of recent appointment, from whom I shall extract all the information he may possess. The transaction referring to a date anterior to his acceptance of a commission, I believe the law martial will not apply to him; and as his character is fair, his conduct in service unexceptionable, and because he has within a few days committed to the guard,

a person, who, within his own quarters, attempted to corrupt him to the interests of Burr, I am disposed to spare him, provided his conduct should be open, fair, and candid; otherwise I shall recommend his dismissal from service. In this case, as in many others, names have no doubt been employed to popularize the association. Mr. Burr has derived considerable aid from the unpardonable use which he has made of my own name, and I have no doubt that of governor Claiborne was employed for the same purpose.

In the depositions which I have given, I have reserved many names of some matter of import. Information against will be had to convict him of misprision of treason. This young man was introduced to me formerly by he possesses splendid talents, and is destitute of fear; indeed the greater part of those whom I have arrested, are desperately brave, and therefore should be well guarded. Mr. Burr has the art of selecting his associates.

This will accompany Swartwout, who proceeds in charge of ensign Mead, and a duplicate, under a blank cover, will be transmitted by lieutenant Sevier, who attends Alexander. Ogden will be sent forward by the next vessel.

Pardon, I beseech you, this crude epistle, written under a pressure of public engagements, and constant interruptions.

I am at my post, ever ready to execute your orders for the national good and glory.

(No. 80.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, December 26th, 1806.

THIS is transmitted by lieutenant Sevier, and will cover a duplicate deposition respecting Swartwout, Alexander, and Ogden, the agents and emissaries of Burr. Against Alexander and others, more important testimony will be offered in a short time. The prisoners should be kept apart, and deprived all communication except with their keepers; they will find many friends and powerful patronage, and are able and daring. Kerr, who gives information concerning Alexander, is suspected himself, of being deep in Burr's plot.

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 81.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, January 2d, 1807.

I AM still without orders, or an answer to my communication made to you from Natchitoches, by lieutenant Smith, which, combined to the circumstances by which I am encompassed, deeply affect my repose, and rend my bosom with doubts and perplexity: yet, believing that I cannot err whilst my means and my exertions are steadily directed to the preservation of the sovereign interests of my country, and the maintenance of the constitution, to you, sir, and to that country, I will look up for support and protection.

The enclosed information from judge Workman, rendered voluntarily after the arrest of his countryman and particular friend, ensign Small, presents a singular spectacle, and may furnish a clue by which we may discover other parts of the same plot.

I have this moment received the inclosed report, from, which I know not how to interpret. Twenty-two days since, Burr was at the rapids of the Ohio, with a large boat loaded with small arms; this is indubitable: but the designs imputed to him are treated as chimerical, and all my efforts are opposed by his friends and our enemies.

(No. 82.)

WASHINGTON, January 3d, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD intended yesterday, to recommend to general Dearborne, the writing to you weekly by post, to convey information of our Western affairs, so long as they are interesting; because it is possible, though not probable, you may sometimes get the information quicker this way than down the river. But the general received yesterday, information of the death of his son in the East-Indies, and of course, cannot now attend to business; I therefore write you a hasty line for the present week, and send it in duplicates by the Athens and the Nashville routes.

The information in the inclosed paper, as to proceeding in the State of Ohio is correct. Blennarhasset's flotilla of 15 boats and 200 barrels of provision, is seized; and there can be no doubt that Tyler's flotilla is also taken, because, on the

17th December, we know there was a sufficient force assembled at Cincinnati to intercept it there, and another party was in pursuit of it on the river above. We are assured that these two flotillas compose the whole of the boats provided. Blennarhasset and Tyler had fled down the river. I do not believe that the number of persons engaged for Burr, has ever amounted to 500, though some have carried them to 1000 or 1500. A part of these were engaged as settlers of Bastrop's land; but the greater part were engaged under the expressed assurance, that the projected enterprize was against Mexico, and secretly authorized by this government; many were expressly enlisted in the name of the United States.

The proclamation, which reached Pittsburg December 2d, and the other parts of the river successively, undeceived both these classes, and of course drew them off; and I have never seen any proof of their having assembled more than 40 men in two boats from Beaver, 50 in Tyler's flotilla, and the boatmen of Blennarhasset; I believe, therefore, that the enterprize may be considered as crushed; but we are not to relax in our attentions, until we hear what has been done at Louisville. If every thing from that place upwards, be successfully arrested, there is nothing from below that is to be feared. Be assured that Tennessee, and particularly general Jackson, are faithful. The orders lodged at Massac and the Chickasaw Bluffs, will probably secure the interception of such fugitives from justice as may escape from Louisville; so that I think you will never see one of them. Still I would not wish, till we hear from Louisville, that this information should relax your preparations in the least, except so far as to dispense with the militia of Mississippi and Orleans leaving their homes, under our orders of November 25; only let them consider themselves under requisition, and be in a state of readiness, should any force too great for your regulars, escape down the river. You will have been sensible, that those orders were given while we supposed you were on the Sabine, and the supposed crisis did not admit the formality of their being passed through you. We had considered fort Adams as the place to make a stand, because it covered the mouth of Red River; you have preferred New-Orleans on the apprehension of a fleet from the West-Indies. Be assured there is not any foundation for such an expectation, but the lying exaggerations of these traitors, to impose on others and swell their pretended means. The very man whom they represented to you as gone to Jamaica, and to bring the fleet, has never been from home, and has regularly

communicated to me every thing which had passed between Burr and him. No such proposition was ever hazarded to him. France or Spain would not send a fleet to take Vera Cruz; and though one of the expeditions now near arriving from England, is probably for Vera Cruz, and perhaps already there, yet the state of things between us, renders it impossible they should countenance an enterprize unauthorized by us. Still I repeat, that these grounds of security, must not stop our proceedings or preparations, until they are further confirmed. Go on, therefore, with your works for the defence of New-Orleans, because they will always be useful, only looking to what should be permanent, rather than means merely temporary. You may expect further information as we receive it; and though I expect it will be such as will place us at our ease, yet we must not place ourselves so until it be certain, but act on the possibility that the resources of our enemy may be greater and deeper than we are yet informed.

Your two confidential messengers delivered their charges safely; one arrived yesterday only, with your letter of November 12th; the oral communications he made me, are truly important. I beseech you to take the most special care of the two letters which he mentioned to me, the one in cypher, the other from another of the conspirators of high standing, and to send them to me by the first conveyance you can trust. It is necessary that all important testimony should be brought to one centre, in order that the guilty may be convicted and the innocent left untroubled. Accept my friendly salutations and assurances of great esteem and respect.

(Signed)

TH: JEFFERSON.

General Wilkinson.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 83.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW ORLEANS, January 9th, 1807, at night.

HAVING discovered that judge Workman had been promoting some enterprize of moment, I put in motion a couple of "adroit intriguants" to develope his project. One of these soon discovered that he had proposed to three persons of distinction, the idea of establishing the independence of

this territory, and afterwards revolutionizing Mexico; but they were all bound to secrecy, and I found after several attempts, that they could not be induced to declare what they knew. I therefore determined, after receiving lieutenant Murray's deposition, to call these gentlemen to my quarters, by separate invitations, and on short notice, to read to them his deposition, to assure them I was apprized of what had passed between Workman and themselves, to warn them against the penalties they might incur by concealment, and to demand from them separately a narrative of facts. I accordingly convened them on the 7th instant, and my project succeeded beyond my expectations. For they not only confirmed the information I had received, with circumstances of considerable variation in each case, but declared that although they did not wish to be considered informers, they were ready to attest the facts, when regularly called on in a court of justice.

Your address to congress has just come to hand; and the thoughtless and impatient, who believe you should know every thing, and that they should occupy your first attention, and who think the affairs of a nation spread over a surface of two thousand miles, can be managed by a "sic volo," are I understand, much appalled by it, and speak of it as the precursor of their abandonment, to the first who may take possession of the country.

Being occupied every moment either by active public engagements, or sorrowful domestic duties, I hear these things "en passant" but have not time to correct the delusion.

The strongest tie which binds me to life, must, from every appearance, be dissolved in a few days, perhaps a few hours. Permit me to be instrumental in bringing colonel Burr to punishment for his treasons against his country, and his attempt on my honor, and I shall be utterly indifferent to the future.

(No. 84.)

WASHINGTON CITY, *January 10th, 1807.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE president directs me to say to thee, "three days ago a pilot boat sent by the conspirators, left New York for New Orleans; you must catch her and examine all the papers she may contain, or those who have gone in her, she has in possession."

(Signed)

General Wilkinson.

ISAAC BRIGGS.

True copy

A PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 85.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW ORLEANS, January 18th, 1807.

I a few minutes since received the interesting information which you will find in the deposition under cover, and I despatch this letter in the hope it may find a prompt passage from the Balize.

You will perceive how dangerous it is in the impending crisis, to rest the safety of this garrison, (the only stay you have here against revolution) on the tardy, inefficient operations of the law; for if Adair had been permitted the liberty of the city for twenty four hours; his art, address and daring spirit, supported by 500 boatmen, and the mass of disaffection which infests this city, would infallibly have produced an insurrection, headed by this impostor, who would have been called the champion of the United States, while I should have been denounced as the agent of Spain. Knowing the man, I comprehended his design, the moment I heard his denunciation; and by a stroke of decision, in the face of the most violent opposition, I have saved a bloody conflict of doubtful issue, and so far preserved the country. Yet..... are sending forth writs of Habeas Corpus to ransack every hole and corner, in quest of the traitor.

The loss of Adair and the conviction his capture must convey to Burr, that I am not the villain he has believed me, will no doubt disconcert his plans; but the embarrassment will soon yield to his fruitful genius, and I look for some deep, dark, strong effort of cunning or despair.

Mr. Burr's agents reported to doctor Carmichael, that he expected to incorporate 2000 men, at the Bayou Pierre, to be drawn from Kentucky and Tennessee, and that he calculates on having 1000 at least in this city, and the Mississippi territory, who are under pay, and bound to receive his orders. He gives a dollar per day, and the promise of 2000 acres of land, and I am apprehensive he may make many recruits in these territories; for Mr. Mead himself has so far relaxed his martial ardor, as recently to declare in a public company that he "began to think less unfavorably of Burr's plans, and that if he could be convinced that his (Burr's) designs, were not immediately directed against the United States, he would wish him success; and notwithstanding as the executive of the Mississippi territory, he must make a shew of resistance, he would suffer him to pass without molestation." This is

a kind of equivocal patriotism, which will have influence in the community over which the young gentleman presides.

I am projecting a plan to entrap Burr, and carry him off, by means of one of his confidentials, but am doubtful of success; in the mean time, every preparation, and every means which my cramped authority and slender means may afford, shall be employed against the usurper; yet sir, without the extension of my powers, to exercise martial law within the chain of my guards, it will be impossible for me to answer for the safety of the place, as I find it impracticable to effect any change in the present police, which opposes no obstacle to the introduction of concealed conspirators by scores daily; and with the depending flood (for the river is very full) we may expect from three to four thousand boatmen to descend from the Ohio, composed of that species of needy, idle, erratic characters which are exactly formed for Mr. Burr's purpose; how then shall I, without support here, or succours from elsewhere, be able to resist his intrigues, backed by such superior force? It will be impossible.

It is proven by the oaths of lieutenant Murray, and ensign Small, that judge Workman, and colonel Kerr, who were members of the same combination, had attempted to corrupt and alienate them from their duty, for the purpose of plundering the bank, seizing the shipping, taking West Florida, and joining Miranda; and it has been further proven, that the former proposed to engage several respectable characters in a plot to revolutionize the territory, and declare its independence of the United States. Yet sir, these men have been taken from my custody, they are put at liberty, and, I pronounce, will, after a sham trial, be discharged. Never before have I realized to my mind, the facility with which corrupt attorneys, and corrupt judges, might convert the law itself into an instrument of oppression or corruption; dreadful indeed is the state of things here. wretched my own situation; for the manner and the means for saving the country are before me, and yet I dare not adopt the one or employ the other. I implore you sir, to examine our condition, and to stretch forth a helping hand to save us.

(No. 86.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW ORLEANS, January 23d, 1807.

A MOMENT of awful suspence has arrived. Mr. Burr's letter to Mr. Mead of the 12th instant, transmitted to

the Secretary of War, is not indicative of doubts, fears or despondence ; and if he is able to put off Mr. Mead for four or five days from the present, we may expect unpleasant scenes to ensue.

The friends of Burr, and my enemies, labor at this moment to stamp on the public mind that Burr surrendered to Mr. Mead on the 16th instant ; they infer that he will be able to baffle inquiry as he did in Kentucky, *and that on his innocence will be established my turpitude. I doubt the truth of the report, but pray heaven it may be correct, regardless of consequences to my person or interests. The point of fame cannot be rendered equivocal.* If Burr has surrendered himself, it must have been compelled by the desertion of his adherents, or by way of stratagem, to gain time for the assembly of his followers, and to impose on the ignorant and the credulous, and to make proselytes. In this case, should he be admitted to bail, I fear the worst that can come.

The.....noted on a former occasion, is said to reside in New Jersey, and is reported to be a man of character—a French emigrant. I understand he abandoned Burr in Kentucky, and has returned, execrating the frauds and deceits which he had been obliged to witness, in order to impose on the people, and the system of brigandage to which Burr's views directly tended. I hear Blennarhasset, near Marietta, is with Burr, and this is the only character I have been able to ascertain of the party which descended with him. Perhaps the inclement spell of weather we have at this moment, may lock up the Ohio, and cut off Mr. Burr's reinforcement. I propose to ascend the river with all the force I can raise, and if he has not surrendered, will seek him as far as our comparative force may with common discretion warrant. At all events I shall watch his motions, and embarrass all his movements. Excuse this scrawl.

(No. 87.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW ORLEANS, February 13th, 1807.

I LAST evening had the honor to receive your letter of the 3d ultimo, and rejoice at Mr. Brigg's safe arrival, however unseasonably ; for I had begun to feel serious concern for his safety.

You must long before this period have heard of the salutary decision, to which I have been driven in this city, and of the persecution and abuse I have suffered and am suffering, in consequence thereof: the late clemency and confidence extended to colonel Burr in the Mississippi territory, the popular standing he had acquired there, his mock trial and acquittal, and his recent flight from justice, may, I hope, have the tendency to dissipate the delusions spread abroad, by his open adherents and numerous secret friends in this quarter; and at the same time sir, to illustrate the soundness of those strong-handed precautions, to which I resorted to destroy the concert and co-operation of the conspirators, to stem the torrent of disaffection, and to save this city from the horrors of civil commotion. *But sir, when the tempest has passed away and dangers have disappeared, I must hope I shall not be left alone, to buffet a combination of the bar and bench.*

I could not believe Mr Burr was so unhallowed and profound a villain, as he has proved himself; deep indeed have been the measures employed to deceive me, and doubtless his impositions have prevailed over hundreds; no doubt remains with me, that he has duped both the.....and.....legations, and converted them to his use, by the promise of the subversion of our government on the one hand, and the revolutionizing of Mexico on the other.

I congratulate you sir, with my whole soul, on the issue which the nefarious project has taken; for although we may for some time to come, be subjected to personal, and indeed local conflicts and collisions in this quarter, yet I consider the general safety secured, and *I view with exultation the triumph of principle in the patriotic display made by the states of the Ohio.*

I shall be careful of the letters to which you have reference; and after they have been duly authenticated, I shall by a safe conveyance transmit them to you with the key to the cypher fully explained; a cypher designated in.....and imparted to Mr. Burr in.....at his request.

From my dispatch of this date to the Secretary of War, you will discover how my plan to seize Mr. Burr has been frustrated; yet I will hope Blennarhasset, Tyler, Ralston and Floyd may not escape me; all of whom shall be sent round to the seat of government, if apprehended. What may be Burr's course I know not, yet I will confess that I believe he still cheats the and therefore it is probable he may take refuge with them. In such a case, what must be my conduct? It would seem that his vengeance, and that of his partisans, here and elsewhere, is pointed at me. After hav-

ing exhausted his genius, in devising calumnies to blacken my character and excite popular odium, he recently wound up with the declaration that so soon as his trial was closed, he would "seek and kill me." Some of my friends are seriously apprehensive for my life, which is of too little value, one would think, to be taken in so foul a way.

(No. 88.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *February 17th, 1807.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to enclose you a duplicate of my letter of the 13th inst. transmitted by the last mail; and in obedience to your desire, I avail myself of the conveyance by judge Sprigg, to forward you one of Burr's original letters to me, and by the next safe conveyance, I will transmit you a literal interpretation of it, duly attested, which I have not yet taken time to render to my satisfaction, though you will find a *substantial exposition* of it in my depositions respecting Swartwout and Bollman.

You have under cover also, a correct interpretation of two letters, received from the second person to whom you make reference; addressed, doubtless, at Mr. Burr's instance, to work upon my prejudices, hopes, fears, interests, and ambition, and written in a cypher of his own projection, (a key word) and conveyed to me in the hieroglyphics possessed by Burr. As these letters go only to prove a knowledge of some undefined impending project, and as the professed design of the writer has not been carried into effect, I fear the exposition will produce no important effect, and it will certainly strengthen the array of my enemies; but at the same time, they prove he must be an important evidence, if he can be brought to speak out. Of these things you will be the best judge, and I hold myself ready to accord with your desires. Of this person's agency in Burr's conspiracy, I know nothing more than what is explained in these letters, which contain the *first, last, and only hint*, even, that he ever offered me, on that or any similar subject. Should you deem it politic, the effect of the enclosed letter may be tried, otherwise let it be destroyed. The flight of Burr, the boldness of his numerous associates in the Mississippi territory, and the very strong interest he has established in that territory, again involve us here in doubts and fears, as to the speedy termination of his illicit enterprise. For if (as is believed by many) he is now concealed near Natchez, and on

the breaking up of the ice, may receive 400 or 500 auxiliaries, it is probable he will make some desperate attempt against the Spaniards, either in West Florida or by Nacogdoches; for unless he can gild his crimes by some extraordinary stroke of fortune, he must seek the grave as his only resort. We have many here who would wish to see him the master of the city, but his followers will not support him (generally) in any attempt directly against the United States; and besides, my little force has become too respectable to be approached by any body of irregulars, without imminent danger. I have this moment been advised of judge Sprigg's determination to postpone his departure, in consequence of which I shall hazard one of Burr's letters by the ensuing mail. has just undeceived with respect to Burr's designs, and now I shall receive an apology, I expect, for his late conduct.

With perfect respect and true attachment,
I am, sir, your faithful and obliged,

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,
President of the United States.

True copy,

A. PINKNEY Cop.

General Wilkinson, to general Dauton, referred to in the preceding letter.

NEW-ORLEANS, February 17th, 1807.

SIR,

YOUR letters by Swartwout and Bollman, both reached my hand at Natchitoches. Such letters from you I had no right to expect, and ought never to have received. What sentiment have you ever heard from me, what tint of character have you ever observed in me, to warrant the conclusion that I was capable of any act of dishonor, much less the very foulest of all infamous crimes, military treason? The arts, the wiles, the audacity and falsehoods of Mr Burr, certainly surpass all example; but being on the spot, and near the seat of government, he should not have cheated your judgment, nor imposed on your understanding: you could have detected his infamous designs against our country, for which we have all staked our lives, and it was your solemn duty to have exposed them.

I hold your letters, and shall not employ them, if you will come forward whenever a trial may ensue, and on oath circumstantiate the grounds on which they were founded;—

this you owe to me and to the public, and I shall expect your conformity to this proposition. I have treated your nephew as you desired; that is, I seized and sent him out of the way of temptation to some overt act, which might have forfeited his life. Your son, major Dayton, is here, and how I have treated him, I will leave it to himself to inform you. I send this letter to Baltimore by the ship Comet, and shall expect your answer by mail, transmitted in a blank to the Secretary of War.

JA: WILKINSON.

General Dayton.

(No. 89.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the president of the United States, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, March 1st, 1807.

I TRANSMIT this by a vessel bound to Baltimore, to cover a duplicate of my letter of the 26th ultimo, and to trespass some further details on your patience.

The enclosed extract of a letter from S. Dinsmore, will apprise you of the state of things at Natchez, and particularly the situation of Blennarhasset, Tyler, Ralston, and Floyd. Should these men be left to the mummery of a trial, before a tribunal which has not cognizance of their offences, they will certainly be discharged; your wisdom then, sir, will decide whether they ought not to be called before the Supreme Court of the United States, by some regular process—for the testimony of doctor Carmichael clearly proves, that Ralston and Floyd were accessaries of Burr, and privy to his illicit designs; and also, that Adair was an associate, and had been sent by Burr to me on a sinister mission. You know better than I do, sir, how to estimate the testimonies to be deduced from those premises, and will, I have no doubt, direct the necessary steps for their attainment.

We have just received reports, by several letters from the town of Mobile, dated the 20th and 21st instant, that Burr had been apprehended in the settlement of Tombigby, by lieutenant Gaines, and carried prisoner to fort Stoddert. It is said he was discovered on the 18th, at a village called Wakefield, about 35 miles from fort Stoddert, and that lieutenant Gaines intercepted him on the road the next day. The account is circumstantial, but as I have no report from Mr. Gaines, I doubt its truth. You have under cover the copy of one letter on which this report is founded.

(No. 90.)

NEW-ORLEANS, March 3d, 1807.

SIR,

I HAVE just received your original letter of the 3d January, and sincerely congratulate you on the arrest of Burr, though I fear, from the route by which he has been sent, that you will never find him at Washington. The popular feelings, his extreme art and desperation, conspire to favor his escape. Mr. Gaines has certainly done for the best, but I should have preferred to send him by sea. The incident of the Spanish officer's visit to Burr, seems confirmatory of the suspicions which I have entertained. It is a fact, that Burr has informed several of his confidants that Yrujo offered him arms and military stores; but he has lied so abominably that his word is worth nothing. I have no immediate fears from the Dons, as their force in the tract they occupy near us is not considerable, and that force is now divided between Baton Rouge, Mobile, and Pensacola; yet we must keep a vigilant eye to them.

For the justice you have done me, I can only say, command my life, and if I had fortune, I would add that also. Suffer no consideration for me to affect the public harmony. But for the natural repulsion opposed to the attacks of an enemy, I could find in my heart to offer myself a voluntary sacrifice to the prejudices and passions of Mr. Randolph, *if he would contract never more to indulge his pride and resentments, without regard to propriety, principle, or decorum.*

Governor Claiborne and myself having differed on some subordinate points, my enemies would infer that I am desirous to supplant him in office. The suggestion is dishonorable to me, and is opposite to every inclination of my breast; indeed he has richly earned more than he enjoys, by the persecution which he has suffered and is still suffering, from those whom he has served; and *now*, could my wishes prevail, or rather, were they necessary, they would be offered in his support.

Ashly, the guide of Burr, and taken with him, was an inhabitant of this city; this man could doubtless say much if he would speak, and therefore should be taken care of: I have written Mr. Gaines, to procure his confession if possible. I presume it will be necessary for me to attend Burr's trial, and if so, I beg I may receive the earliest advice of it.

With perfect respect and attachment,

I am, sir, your faithful and obliged,

JA: WILKINSON.

Thomas Jefferson,

President of the United States.

(No. 91.)

HEAD QUARTERS,

NATCHITOCHEs, October 16th, 1806.

SIR,

NOTHING new has occurred since my last of the 12th instant. I have advanced about one hundred men to the Adaies, and in three or four days shall follow with my whole force. The Spaniards continue posted on the right bank of the Sabine, and have guards at all the fords; they violate our territory daily, by crossing the river with light armed parties, and speak confidently of a reinforcement of 1400 men.

You have under cover a copy of the letter transmitted to me for you, by governor Cordero, and written by the captain general Salcedo, in reply to your letter to governor Herrera. I have considered it of so much importance, that I have dispatched the original to the executive of the United States, though I have not been able to obtain a satisfactory translation of it.

I have not received the scrip of a pen from government since we parted; *I consider the times eventful, and therefore must pray of you to be ready for offence as well as defence: you cannot be too alert and vigilant.*

Health and respect,

(Signed)

JA: WILKINSON.

His excellency governor Claiborne.

(No. 92.)

NEW ORLEANS, March 3d, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

LIEUTENANT Ballard, of the navy yard, informed me, a Spanish armed vessel had permission to pass up the river to Baton Rouge. Since receiving lieutenant Gaines's letter, which I have just sent you, I think we should view every movement of the Spaniards with a jealous regard; for truly, I must believe they have been more or less connected in Burr's conspiracy. Pardon this suggestion, which I dare say has struck you.

Truly yours,

(Signed)

JA: WILKINSON.

Governor Claiborne.

(No. 93.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, November 8th, 1806.

SIR,

THE great probability of an amicable and early settlement of our differences with Spain, at Paris, had rendered the executive of the United States extremely desirous of avoiding actual hostilities, because it would be mere destruction of human life, without affecting in the smallest degree, the settlement or its conditions. They had therefore determined to assume the Sabine as a temporary line of separation, between the troops of the two nations; including no place actually held by Spain, but Bayou Pierre, which was therefore excepted in the orders of May 6th, and that without any restriction as to the force the Spaniards might choose to place there. We yielded to their retaining its possession because they had it; and the temporary ground we thought it best to take was the *status quo*.

The executive hope that you have done no more than take the position hinted at in a former letter of yours, between Bayou Pierre and Nacogdoches, but still on our side of the Sabine, in order by putting them in fear for Nacogdoches, to induce them to retire from Bayou Pierre. If this has taken place, and without any actual hostility, it will be deemed fortunate: but if hostilities have taken place, in order to drive the Spaniards by force from Bayou Pierre, the executive regret it, as contrary to their intentions, and as a useless sacrifice of the lives it may have cost. But whether hostilities have been actually committed or not, you are immediately instructed to propose to the Spanish commandant, a written convention of the tenor of the one now enclosed; and if it is agreed to, you will leave at Natchitoches only three companies, and withdraw the rest of the force to Fort Adams. But if the convention cannot be obtained, you may agree to such temporary line of patrols between the respective positions, occupied by the troops of the two nations, as will prevent or suspend hostilities till further orders; and if you should have at that time, possession of Bayou Pierre, you may even agree, should it be insisted on, to withdraw the United States troops from that settlement, provided it shall not be occupied by the Spanish troops.

If every proposition, either of convention, suspension or temporary line, shall be rejected, you will take the best measures for the protection and defence of the settlements in our actual possession: still observing that if no hostilities shall have begun, you are to remain, till attacked, strictly on

the defensive ; and that you are not, in any event whatever, to cross the Sabine river.

If either a convention, or suspension of hostilities, shall be agreed on, any Spanish post east of the Mississippi, which may, as you seem to have contemplated, have been previously occupied by us, must be evacuated. Nor is any such post to be occupied, even in case hostilities are continued on the west of the Mississippi, unless the safety of New Orleans shall, in the joint opinion of governor Claiborne and yourself, render it necessary to take possession of the country between the Mississippi and Pearl rivers. No part of the country east of Pearl river, must in any event be occupied.

I am very respectfully, sir,
your obedient servant,

H. DEARBORN.

General James Wilkinson.

Heads of a convention to be proposed between the commanding officers of the American and Spanish troops, westward of the Mississippi, and southward of the Red river.

1. There shall be an immediate suspension of hostilities between the United States and Spanish troops, westward of the Mississippi. The Sabine river shall be assumed as a temporary line of separation, between the troops of the two nations ; and the troops of neither party shall occupy any post on Red river, or any of its waters above Natchitoches.

2. The intercourse between the citizens and subjects of the two powers heretofore permitted, shall be restored. [or,]

2. No intercourse shall be allowed between the citizens and subjects of the two nations dwelling on either side of the said line, and any such person, passing to the other side thereof, may be imprisoned at pleasure, at the nearest post of the party arresting him.

3. Neither party shall establish any new military post between the meridians of Natchitoches and Nacogdoches, but the increasing the strength of the military posts, now held by them, shall be no breach of this convention.

4. Neither party shall excite the Indians to take up arms, or to take any part in the dispute between the two nations ; on the contrary, their right [of self government in their own towns and territories, and] of passing freely and amicably into the territories of these parties, shall remain as heretofore.

5. The citizens or subjects of either party, who have been arrested by the troops of the other, and are now in confinement, shall be immediately liberated, and passports given them to return home.

6. The supreme authority of either nation shall be free to refuse its ratification of this convention; and, after ratifying it, shall be free to revoke it at pleasure; but no act shall be done in contravention of it by either party, during six months from the date of this convention, nor thereafter, until one month's notice shall have been given the other party of such refusal to ratify, or of such revocation.

NOTES.

Article 1. It may however be agreed on as an ultimatum, that the Spaniards may keep possession of Bayou Pierre, but the garrison not to exceed the number it consisted of before the first day of June last. If the Spaniards agree to withdraw their troops to St. Antonio, leaving no more than a given number, say 300, at Nacogdoches, it may be agreed that the United States will withdraw their troops from Red river, leaving no more than a given number, say 300, at Natchitoches, and the other settlements west of the bank of the Mississippi.

Art. 2. Agreed.

Art. 4. The words between [] may be omitted.

Art. 5. Not to be considered as an ultimatum.

Art. 6. Not to be insisted on.

(No. 94.)

Letter from general Andrew Jackson, to his excellency Wm. C. C. Claiborne, Esq.

NASHVILLE, November 12th, 1806:

SIR,

ALTHOUGH it is a long time since I sat down to write you, still that friendship which once existed, remains bright on my part; and although since I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have waded through difficult and disagreeable scenes, still I have all that fondness for my old and former friends that I ever had, and their memory has been endeared to me by the treachery I have experienced since I saw you, by some newly acquired ones. Indeed I fear treachery is become the order of the day; this induces me to write to you. Put your town in a state of defence; organize your militia, and defend your city as well against internal enemies as external: but I fear you will meet with an attack from quar-

ters you do not at present expect. Be upon the alert; keep a watchful eye on our general, and beware of an attack, as well from your own country as Spain. I fear there is something rotten in the state of Denmark. You have enemies within your own city, that may try to subvert your government, and try to separate it from the Union. You know I never hazard ideas without good grounds: you will keep these hints to yourself. But I say again, be upon the alert; your government, I fear, is in danger. I fear there are plans on foot inimical to the Union; whether they will be attempted to be carried into effect or not, I cannot say; but rest assured they are in operation, or I calculate badly. Beware of the month of December. I love my country and government; I hate the Dons. I would delight to see Mexico reduced; but I will die in the last ditch, before I would yield a foot to the Dons, or see the Union disunited. This I write for your own eye, and for your own safety; profit by it, and the Ides of March remember.

With sincere respect,

I am, as usual, your sincere friend,

(Signed)

ANDREW JACKSON.

Mrs. Jackson desires her best wishes to you.

(No. 95.)

Deposition of commodore Shaw.

BE it known, that on or about the seventh day of January, anno domini 1807, Mr. Bradford, printer of the New-Orleans Gazette, waited on this deponent, captain Shaw, of the United States' navy, and after delivering a letter from a correspondent, he observed, that he had spent some time in the City of Washington, and Philadelphia; and from Philadelphia he had travelled to Pittsburg, and from thence proceeded towards New-Orleans; that the country through which he passed, was filled with commotion, and that there were a great number of the friends and followers of colonel Burr. Mr Bradford also mentioned, that he had seen at the mouth of Cumberland river, some of the public gun-boats, and a number of men employed in fitting them out, and that they were to join Burr; that the men at work on board the gun-boats, told him (Bradford) that colonel Lyon had given up the gun-boats to colonel Burr; and that he, colonel Lyon, was one of Burr's partizans. Bradford further observes, that he saw a number of small arms, which he supposed were car-

ried on board the gun-boats; and that the men at work on board the gun-boats, informed him (Bradford) that colonel Burr had issued arms and ammunition to 12,000 men; that Burr's flotilla consisted of seven gun-boats, and a brig of 10 guns; and that captain Talbot was commander of the flotilla. Bradford also observed, that he was suspected, and that in order to shew his innocence, he would wait on general Wilkinson, and disclose to him all he knew concerning Burr and his plots; and further this deponent saith not.

JOHN SHAW.

Sworn and subscribed before me, this 12th day of May, 1807.

B. CENAS,

Justice of the peace.

(No. 96.)

Deposition of commodore Shaw and William Tharft.

BE it remembered, that this day, to wit: the sixteenth day of April, anno domini 1807, personally appeared before me the subscriber, one of the justices of the peace for the city and parish of New-Orleans, John Shaw, Esq. captain in the United States' navy, and William Tharft, Esq. who being duly sworn on the holy evangelist of the Almighty God, declare and say, that on or about the fifteenth day of January last, 1807, passing by the coffee-house, about the hour of twelve o'clock at noon, they were accosted opposite the principal by judge Prevost of this place, who observed, that he was happy to inform these deponents, that general Adair, the second in command to colonel Burr, had arrived in town, and was then at madam Fourage's; that he had just waited on him, or had seen the man who had created so much stir, who said colonel Burr would be in town in three days after him; that it would soon be discovered if the constitution and justice would prevail, or that of the usurpation of power and tyranny manifested in the measures at present adopted. Other remarks were made by the judge, in tone and gesture discovering evident marks of irritation and opposition to the measures of the officers of the government, and impressed one of the deponents with an idea that the judge's object was to be personal with captain John Shaw; and extorted a reply, that he (captain Shaw) knew no private character he obeyed, and executed his orders without partiality, and should always be alert to meet and apprehend the disturbers of the peace and harmony

of his government. These deponents remained but a few minutes with judge Prevost, and went to the lodgings of the captain, where the deponents considered it correct to inform general Wilkinson that general Adair was then in town; which captain Shaw did, by sending his servant with a note to general Wilkinson.

JOHN SHAW,
WM. THARP.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the day and year within written.

B. CENAS,
Justice of the peace.

(No. 97.)

Translation of the extract of a letter from a gentleman of rank, who passed the mountains with colonel Burr, dated Louisville, Kentucky, September 10th, 1806, to another gentleman, engaged in the public service at New-Orleans.

"I ARRIVED here yesterday, after having rode eight hundred and ten miles, sometimes being interrupted in the route, from complaisance to the companion of my journey, whom I fortunately rejoined at 150 miles from Philadelphia, and who appeared to have friends and business in every corner of the back parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia, and the states of Ohio and Kentucky. I did not part with him until we reached Chilicothe, on the Scioto river, where my affairs, or rather our common affairs (for I have become his associate) obliged us to take different routes for Louisville, where I expect him, that we may consult together, and that I may take his letters to the *merchants* at St. Louis, where I shall be charged with all the affairs of *the company*, while he will have the management on the Ohio. We shall make our best exertions that our *merchandise* may be in readiness in the month of October, in order that it may be *delivered at New-Orleans* by the middle or end of *December*."

(No. 98.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *December 17th, 1806.*

SIR,

HAPPENING some days since to be in a company, where each one was offering his opinion, concerning the probable

object of the military preparations that were going on, and the cause of the secrecy observed; some one said, that he believed there existed well grounded apprehensions from Burr's coming this way, in his expedition to Mexico. This brought to mind, a proposal which had been made to me, to join an association for that purpose: I mentioned that such had been the case. This circumstance scarcely ever occurred to my mind, till on the 16th inst. I read the governor's proclamation. After some reflection, I determined to disclose what I knew concerning it. I found commodore Shaw in company with his excellency; to them I made the following disclosure, viz. Being in town, from Appaloussa county, in February last, and happening to be at the principal, I there met Mr. Richard R. Keene, who took me aside, and after the usual salutations, told me that he thought I would be a fine fellow in a hazardous expedition, and said, "Rogers, what would you think of a trip to Mexico;" my answer was, that I should be pleased to go any where, if money was abundant there; but begged him to be explicit: he said that he could disclose nothing of the plan, without my taking the oath of secrecy—to this I objected; he then said, I am going out of my bounds, my good fellow, but assure yourself that A. Burr heads the party, which has been ten years on foot; he has ten thousand men at command, and many emissaries in the United States and Spanish America, who are making partizans. Many of the most influential characters of the United States, continued he, are of the association, such as Jonathan Dayton; here he stopped. I asked if there were any partizans here. Yes, there is Livingston, captain Stille, Gurley and Jas. Brown, and lieutenant Wilson, and we wish as many of the army as possible. He mentioned, I thought, the two last characters, more with an intention to bring me over than any thing else; he did it hesitatingly—there, said he, we shall have a government upon liberal principles; none of your niggardly democracies. He left me, with saying that we shall have a meeting to-morrow evening, where you may go with me. I went up the river before the meeting took place. I had forgot to mention, that he said the plan was similar to that of the Irish rebels, being so many smaller circles uniting in a larger; and that no one member knew more than four or five more, so that no dangerous or extensive disclosures could be made by the weak-hearted.

W. ROGERS,

Surgeon U. S. navy.

P. S. The above narration was made known soon after my arrival in Appaloussa, to my brother-in-law, major Geo. King;

we jointly laughed at it, as a wild, impracticable scheme, and has been considered ever as such by me, till lately. There may be errors in the detail, but the principal circumstances are certainly correct

W. ROGERS.

Sworn to and signed before me, this seventeenth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and six.

JAMES CARRICK,

Justice of the peace for the county of Orleans.

(No. 99.)

MIDDLETOWN, December 22d, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

EXPECT a large military force to take possession of your city; should it not happen before this reaches you, you may look out with hourly expectation of seeing it headed by colonel Burr.

This is intended, should you see it in time, to apprise, in order that you be in readiness to make your advantages of the times. A number of persons from this neighbourhood is engaged on this expedition, amongst the number, is your acquaintance, M. A. Ralston.

Believe me to be, though much disappointed,
Still respectfully yours,

W. WHITE.

Please to present my real and most sincere respects to your lady, Mrs. Burk; tell her I have not yet forgotten the promised cask of brand.

W. W.

Mr. A. Burk.

(No. 100.)

NEW-ORLEANS, December 23d, 1806.

THE undersigned, on their solemn oaths, declare, that in a conversation with James Alexander, Esq. about the beginning of the present month, at the house of A. L. Duncan, Esq. on the subject of colonel Burr's expected expedition to this territory; he expressed in general terms, a disaffection to the government of the United States, and declared, that although he was a citizen of those states, he was, in politics and patriotism, an Englishman. That as to the expedition

of Burr against Louisiana and Mexico, he was confident it would succeed, should the attempt be made, as the contest was to be between Wilkinson and Burr; men between whose military talents there was no comparison; and significantly enquiring at the same time, if the general had confidence in his officers. That at the head of *one thousand men*, Burr, in his opinion, would be able, in defiance of all the opposition that could be made against him, to take possession of this place, and command all the resources of the country; which would enable him to accomplish his objects in Mexico. That when opposed in those opinions, the said Alexander endeavored to support them by argument, and discovered so much zeal and passion, that politeness and delicacy to the gentleman at whose table we were guests, obliged us to change the conversation; that from the whole tenor of Mr. Alexander's conversation on this occasion, and particularly his zealous vindication of the political and military character of colonel Burr, the undersigned were impressed with the belief, that he was accessory to, or concerned in the plot.

(Signed)

M. HOOKE,
R. DAVIDSON.

Signed and sworn to, the 24th December, 1806, before me,
a justice of the peace of this county.

(Signed)

JAMES CARRICK.

(No. 101.)
NEW-ORLEANS, *December 24th*, 1806.*Benjamin Hildreth.*

THIS man first appeared in the United States' rendezvous, on the 20th inst. and offered himself to ship, as a sail-maker, on board the schooner *Revenge*. On being told that no such birth was vacant, he, after much singular and ambiguous conversation, declared that forty dollars a month would not tempt him; that he had plenty of money, and did not like the business.

On the 21st inst. Hildreth came in to the rendezvous, and then and there, in the hearing of the recruiting officer, declared himself a friend of Burr; but the said Hildreth being intoxicated, no notice was taken of him, except turning him out of doors.

On the evening of the 23d inst. the said Hildreth was standing and talking with a person in the rendezvous, just as the recruiting officer entered the house; Hildreth, on perceiving

him enter, said in a loud voice, which was distinctly heard by the persons present, "*I am a friend of Aaron Burr.*" The recruiting officer demanded immediately of Hildreth, if he were sober, and was answered in the following words, "never more sober in my life." Hildreth was then knocked down and secured; in this situation he affected extreme intoxication, giving loose to a variety of expressions in favor of Burr, and against the United States.

JOHN RUSH,

Recruiting officer U. S. schooner Revenge.

(No. 102.)

Extract of a letter from Lewis Kerr, to gen. Wilkinson, dated

NEW-ORLEANS, December 23d, 1806.

MR. ALEXANDER, in a conversation I had with him, shortly after his return to this country, endeavored to persuade me, that the Western states derived no advantage from the Union, and would be materially benefited by a separation. A warm argument ensued between us; but I at the time, thought that he was arguing merely for the sake of contradiction, a practice not unusual with him.

After the arrest of Bollman, Mr. Alexander and I frequently conversed on the subject; I told him, that the interest he took in B's fate, would render him suspected: he said he should esteem it an honor to be so arrested. I have been told, that he made use of the same expression publicly, at the coffee-house, but I was not present.

(No. 103.)

I, JOHN NICHOLSON, of the city of New-Orleans, do depose and say, that about the beginning of the present month, in conversation with James Alexander, he asked what I thought of Burr's intention to conquer this place, and if I should not like to take a jaunt to Mexico. I answered, that Burr was a traitor, and wished he might share the fate he deserved. He then asked, if I would be surprised to hear general Wilkinson order his army to salute colonel Burr as their commander in chief. On my answering, it was impossible that the general could be the associate of so great a traitor, he concluded by asking, if I would receive a commission

under colonel Burr. I answered in the negative, and the conversation ceased.

JOHN NICHOLSON.

Sworn before me, 26th December, 1806.

ELIPHALET FITCH,

Justice of the peace.

(No. 104.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *December 26th, 1806.*

I, WILLIAM FLOOD, of the city of New-Orleans, physician, do depose and say, that about the beginning of the present month, in company with James Alexander, I heard him say that a secession of the western states from the union, would shortly take place, and that the government merited the separation for their imbecile conduct in not extending to them, that protection which they had a right to demand; that the government was feeble and inefficient; and a variety of other conversation, tending to justify the separation of the Western states.

WILLIAM FLOOD.

Sworn before me, this 26th December, 1806.

ELIPHALET FITCH.

Justice of the peace.

(No. 105.)

AT a superior court, holden at the city of New-Orleans, in the county of Orleans, within and for the territory of Orleans, on the twelfth day of January. in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seven :

The grand jurors within, and for the said territory of Orleans, charged among other things, to enquire if any person had within this territory, began or set on foot, or provided or prepared the means for any military expedition, or enterprize, to be carried on from thence against the territory or dominions of any foreign prince or state, with whom the United States are at peace :

Present, that they are satisfied from the evidence exhibited to them, that James Workman, of the city of New-Orleans aforesaid, and Lewis Kerr of the same place, together with other associates to the jurors unknown, did, on or about twelve months past, confederate together, for the purpose of

making a military expedition against the dominions of the king of Spain, with which power the United States were then at peace ; that in order to carry into effect this unlawful expedition, the said Workman and Kerr did entice, persuade, and use their influence to corrupt divers citizens of this territory, together with several officers of the army of the United States, whom they attempted to seduce, and alienate from their duty, to engage in this unlawful enterprize. That to carry this expedition into effect, they did propose, counsel, and advise, to seize on the banks in this city, and the vessels lying in its harbor ; to invade the post of Baton Rouge, to take possession of Mobile, and from thence, by the aid of a maritime force, which they declared would co-operate with them at the latter place, to proceed to the invasion of the Spanish provinces of Mexico.

That in order more completely to execute their nefarious designs, they declared and gave out under oaths of secrecy, that men of the most influential characters were engaged with them in this unlawful expedition, as well in this said territory, as in different parts of the United States.

The jurors aforesaid do therefore present, that an unlawful military expedition as above mentioned, has been set on foot in this territory, by the above named James Workman and Lewis Kerr, and others unknown, all which the jurors aforesaid respectfully submit.

A true presentment,

EVAN JONES, Foreman.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the original presentment on file in my office.

J. W. SMITH, Clk.

(No. 106.)

AT a superior court, holden at the city of New-Orleans, in the county of Orleans, within and for the territory of Orleans, on the 12th day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seven :

The grand jurors, within and for the said territory, on their oath, present, that James Workman, late of the city of New-Orleans, in the county and territory aforesaid, esquire, being a wicked and seditious man, and unmindful of the duty of his allegiance, and contriving and intending the peace and common tranquillity of this territory, to disquiet, molest, and disturb ; and the government by law established therein, wholly to subvert and overthrow, and to excite the good citizens of

this said territory, to insurrection, rebellion, and revolt, as well against the government by law established therein, as against the laws and government of the United States of America, heretofore, to wit. on the first day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and six, and on divers other days and times, as well before as after, at the city aforesaid, in the county aforesaid, wickedly and seditiously, did counsel, advise, entice, and persuade, certain divers good citizens of this said territory, to aid, assist, and promote him, the said James Workman, and divers others, to the jury unknown, (whom the said James Workman, declared to be his associates in the same wicked, seditious, and traitorous project) wholly to separate this said territory from the government of the United States, to declare the same independent thereof, and wholly to subvert the government of this said territory; to transport out of this said territory, the person then lawfully exercising the powers of governor thereof, and to establish, by violence and force of arms, another government therein, wholly independent of the government of the United States of America, against the peace of this territory, and the law in such case made and provided.

A true bill,

EVAN JONES, Foreman.

Judgment, that the indictment be quashed.

June 4th, 1807.

I hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true copy of the original indictment, and the proceedings thereon, on file in my office.

J. W. SMITH, Clk.

(No. 107.)

COUNTY OF ORLEANS, ss.

PERSONALLY appeared before me, the subscriber, one of the justices of the peace in and for the said county, doctor John F. Carmichael, who, on his solemn oath declares, that on the evening of the 11th of January inst. Mr. Ralston, and Mr. Floyd, the son of captain Floyd, of Louisville, Kentucky, called at the house of this deponent; spent the evening, and breakfasted with him the next day; that the conversation, during the evening and morning, generally related to the various opinions in circulation respecting colonel Burr, and the situation of this country; that after breakfast, Mr. Ralston opened his business with this deponent, stating that

he had descended the Mississippi, as far as New-Madrid, in company with colonel Burr, where he left him ; that general Adair had gone to New-Orleans, by a circuitous route, and that his intention was to communicate with general Wilkinson, and to return, so as to meet them at my house about that time, if possible ; that it was an object with them, to ascertain the exact situation of the fort at Baton Rouge, the state of the works, the number of men, its weak situation ; and that fort Adams was of some consequence ; what United States' troops were there, and who commanded them ; where the gun-boats were, and who individually commanded them ; who was the commander of marines, &c. All these questions were answered by this deponent as far as he had been acquainted with them. The said Ralston and Floyd, proposed to this deponent to visit Baton Rouge, to ascertain the exact situation of that fort ; but declined, when the orders of colonel Grand Prez were stated, and the difficulty attending such an enterprize. Mr. Ralston informed me, that colonel Burr was to be, on the 12th day of January, inst. at Bayou Pierre, where he was to wait for his reinforcements, and to receive his information from his agents, who were circulated through the country in that time ; that the first object of colonel Burr was to take Baton Rouge, where he was to raise his standard, and to make his communication to the government of the United States ; where he was to be joined by a number of men already engaged, to the amount of ten thousand men, if necessary ; that the number of men at present with colonel Burr, did not exceed one hundred and fifty, but colonel Burr's arrangements were so made, that the men already engaged in Kentucky and Tennessee, should join without show, so that no possible alarm or suspicion, on the part of the general government, might take place before he had left the government, and taken possession of Baton Rouge. Mr. Ralston further stated to this deponent, that it was not the intention of colonel Burr to promote and make a separation of the Union, but to act against the Spanish government, and stated the intended expedition against Mexico. When this deponent mentioned the name of captain Shaw, Mr. Ralston observed, that if he was one of the Mediterranean officers, he was friendly to their measures ; that it was well understood, that a large proportion of the officers of the army and Mediterranean officers, were already engaged in their interests. Mr. Ralston expressed great surprise at the conduct of general Wilkinson, in arresting certain characters, Swartwout, Ogden, Bollman, and Alexander, and repeatedly asked this deponent, what he thought of the conduct of general Wil-

kinson, and whether he believed he had deserted the interests of the party ; or was it only to cover his greater objects. This deponent further declares, that Mr. Ralston and Mr. Floyd, visited fort Adams, on the evening of the 12th of January, inst between sun-set and dark, and walked round the said fort.

(Signed) JOHN F. CARMICHAEL.

Sworn and subscribed before me, this 18th day of January, 1807.

(Signed)

B. CENAS,
Justice of the peace.

(No. 108.)

THE undersigned, volunteers of the New-Orleans Independent Company of Artillery, on this 11th day of January, 1807, hereby declare, that the last evening, during the hours of two and three o'clock, a certain man by the name of Peoples as he called himself, came into the guard-house at the United States' bank, and held out a conversation relative to colonel Burr's expedition, to the following effect ; that he, Peoples, was commissioned by colonel Burr, and that the commission was in his chest ; that 12,000 men were under Burr, and 300 had arrived at Natchez, but appeared as citizens ; that they came down six and seven in a boat ; that colonel Burr would not injure any man, and would go to Red river ; that three gun-boats were taken by Burr, of the United States ; that the force up the river, would not hinder Burr, and that the American force would not prevent the expedition of Burr. He shewed his epaulets to the undersigned, and made use of other expressions which were intended to carry into operation a mutinous spirit.

(Signed) JAMES ROBINSON, Serg.
D. GLASS,
JAMES JEUNE,
PERDOME.

By the secretary,

T. BROOKS.

(No. 109.)

AS I passed through the Chocktaw nation, I was overtaken by colonel M^cKee, who informed me, he had set out for

the Chickasaw Bluffs; that on his way, he was astonished to find an express, under the pay of the United States, with a letter from colonel Burr to himself, with orders to go to him wherever he might be, and deliver it; he also mentioned his having a letter for the Secretary of War. The colonel appeared desirous to reach Bruinsburgh as soon as possible, and mentioned that he expected to see colonel Burr. He, while conversing with me, appeared to be at a loss what could be his (Burr's) object; he expressed surprise at the stories gaining belief, that he intended to plunder New-Orleans, and gave as a reason, that he did not think there were men so abandoned in the United States, as to attempt it. When we arrived at Gibsonport, the colonel left me to go to Bruinsburgh, near which place colonel Burr's boats then lay. * Colonel Wooldridge informed me, that a number of persons from the neighbourhood, had called to see colonel Burr as soon as his arrival was announced; and that he told so plausible a story, that they returned very much pleased with him. He was ordered by Mr. Mead to march the whole force of the county down to where colonel Burr's boats then lay, and make him a prisoner; he was astonished to find only thirty-five men would turn out on the occasion. I saw a number of militia on the way, through the upper counties of the Mississippi territory; the greater part of those with whom I conversed, declared they wished colonel Burr's plans might take effect; and declared, if he was only at Baton Rouge, they would join him. Colonel Wooldridge informed me, that Burr had, in a conversation with him, declared his intention was to take the Floridas, and not New-Orleans, as had been represented by general Wilkinson.

I learnt, while in Natchez, that colonel Burr had, through colonel Fitzpatrick, proposed to Mr. Mead, to give himself up to the civil authority, provided he could have a trial in the territory; he declared, that sooner than be delivered to general Wilkinson, or sent round to Washington City for trial, he would defend himself while he had a man living. It was further understood, that if colonel Burr could not convince Mr. Mead that his intentions or plans were not inimical to the government, he was to be placed in the same situation as when he gave himself up.

(Signed)

T. A. SMITH.

* *Commanding officer of the militia of the county.*

(No. 110.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *March 22d, 1807.*

SIR,

AGREEABLE to the request of your excellency, I transmit an account of a conversation I had some time in the month of October last with a Mr. Delabigarre, a French gentleman, with whom I was at that time on board a small vessel on a passage from Pascagoula to this place; the conversation as near as I can recollect is as follows: A short time before leaving Pascagoula in October last, I became acquainted with Mr. D. and frequently in the course of desultory conversation with him, he hinted to me that a revolution in Orleans might be soon expected: I laughed at the idea, and not supposing him serious, took no notice. Upon leaving Pascagoula for this place, Mr. D. came passenger in the same vessel, and the day after sailing he invited me to breakfast with him; while at breakfast, Mr. D. asked me if I was a free-mason, and having satisfied him on that head, he then asked me if I had any property in New-Orleans, and what—having told him that I had, he advised me to dispose of it, as in a short time a revolution would certainly take place there; that this country would (as he was certain) soon be separated from the Union, and that in case those events should happen, my property would be of no value—he said that he with many others were determined to make their fortunes, and if I would sell my property, and place the money in their stock he would insure me a fortune in a few months—that he wanted a few more enterprising young men whose fortunes would be soon made. From the tenor of Mr. D's conversation, I apprehended that he was really acquainted with some plan of a foreign enemy, to endeavor to excite a revolution here; but considering the idea rather absurd, I told him, if the Spaniards, or French should by any means endeavor to repossess Louisiana they would not keep it; for there were Kentuckymen enough to defeat any attempt of that kind within three months—he smiled at this, and said I was mistaken in the quarter from which it would arise, that it would originate among ourselves. I replied, as far as I was informed, the people in general and the officers of the army, were too much attached to the laws, and the sacred constitution of their country; he replied that the country was too large to be governed by one president, and stated various reasons why, as he also said, I was much mistaken in the people and the officers—he further stated that his scheme was approved, and would be headed, by some of the principal

officers of the army of the United States. The above is the substance of the conversation—Mr. D's. continuing throughout the day to hint to me, that if I would embark in the scheme my fortune would be certainly made, I wished to know the particulars; but he refused to satisfy me then, saying that if I would call upon him at his house, in New-Orleans, he would satisfy me respecting the plan and the certainty of success. The next day we arrived at the Bayou, and I heard no more about Mr. D. until ten days after, when his servant meeting me in the street, told me his master was unwell, and wished to see me. I did not go, as my business was then rather pressing.

It may be proper here to remark, that during the time the above conversation took place, Mr. D. as I thought, had been drinking rather much, and it appeared to me that liquor had operated pretty strongly. I thought no more of Mr. D. or his revolution until the arrest of Mr. Alexander, on which occasion being called upon as one of the corps of dragoons to assist, the above conversation again came to mind; but not liking the mode of Mr. A's. arrest, I was apprehensive that if I mentioned the conversation, I might subject myself to difficulty, if the caprice of an individual should consider it in an improper light, and therefore I was silent on the occasion.

I am, sir, with due respect,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

(Signed)

WILLIAM BRAND.

COUNTY OF ORLEANS, ss.

Personally appeared William Brand, who on his solemn oath declares that the facts stated in the above and within writing, are to the best of his knowledge and belief, sincere, and true.

WILLIAM BRAND.

Sworn and subscribed before me this 23d, March 1807.

B. CENAS,

Justice of the peace.

(No. 111.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *April 14th*, 1807.

A SHORT period after the arrest of Mr. James Alexander, I was told by Mr. R. Sterry, that Mr. Alexander had read to him some days before, an address to the inhabitants of

the Western country, in which a number of fanciful grievances were pointed out, arising from their connection with the Eastern and Northern states: they were told that it would be their interest to separate, and to throw off at once the yoke of bondage. When asked by Mr. A. for his opinion of the address, he, Mr. Sterry, observed, "that the man who wrote it, must be a damned rascal." By accident, he discovered that the piece was in the hand writing of Mr. Alexander.

O. N. SPENCE.

(No. 112.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *January 16th, 1807.*

ON the night prior to my late arrest, December, 1806, I met the honorable Dom. A. Hall, judge of the federal district court, at the public ball-room; at my request, we went into a private room adjoining, where I related to him the disagreeable situation in which I felt, and opened to him the matter as related to my being under an oath, respecting Mexican affairs; and said, myself, that it was not my intention to give up the name of the person who had sworn me. He said, "By God, Small, I don't think there is an honest fellow on earth than you are, and I would not, if I were you, give up the name." These were the precise words. On the 15th of January, 1807, lieutenant Murray and myself went to judge Hall's, to give our evidence, particularly against Lewis Kerr and judge Workman, who were present, with their counsel, Edward Livingston. Murray, on seeing that Livingston was taking out a habeas corpus for general Adair, requested to retire for fifteen minutes. I accompanied him, and after we were a little distance from the door, the judge (Hall) called us back, and requested that we should not tell the general (Wilkinson) that the habeas corpus was a taking out; lieutenant Murray replied, that that was his business out, and that he certainly should do it, as he conceived it his duty, or words to that effect. The judge said, that it was by the request of Mr. Livingston, he had interfered or spoken to us.

(Signed)

FRANCIS W. SMALL,

Ensign 2d regiment.

Signed and sworn to, before me the undersigned, the 16th day of January, 1807, a justice of the peace for the county of New-Orleans.

(Signed)

JAMES CARRICK.

(No. 113.)

NEW-ORLEANS, *January 6th, 1807.*

THIS day Mr. James Bradford, printer of the Orleans Gazette, called on me, and offered the following information relative to colonel Burr and his operations. On enquiry, Mr. Bradford observed he had nothing to state which had come under his own immediate personal knowledge; but, that he had his information from a young man from Frankfort, in Kentucky, by the name of Glass; in whose veracity he had the greatest confidence, and who arrived at Natchez shortly after he (Bradford) came there from the upper country, and where he had been waiting some eight or ten days, for the purpose of taking in cotton.

The account which Mr. Glass gave, was as follows: on the fourth of December Mr. Glass left Louisville, where he had been for a few days, on his way to this country, at which place he saw a great number of men publicly drawing arms and uniform, who did not hesitate, but openly professed themselves the associates of colonel Burr; that at the time he (Mr. Glass) left Louisville, colonel Burr was at Frankfort; and that the men then arming in the former place, were enlisted for him, but were under the command of Messrs. Davis and George Floyd; the former with the rank of colonel, the latter of major; that the object which these gentlemen held out to such as thought proper to join their standard, was an expedition to Mexico. Colonel Floyd's regiment was immediately to set out for the mouth of the Cumberland river, the grand rendezvous for the troops destined for the Mexican expedition. Mr. Glass farther stated, that when he passed the mouth of the Cumberland, which must have been about the 12th December, colonel Lyon was there, with a number of men, and was waiting for two gun-boats that were about ten miles above, on that river, which were expected on the 20th, the time that two other gun-boats, built at Louisville, were to sail; these last boats were to transport the stores and arms then at Louisville. Mr. Glass also stated, that he learned, while at the mouth of Cumberland, that general Adair was shortly expected there, with a body of six thousand men; many of whom were the most respectable citizens of the state of Kentucky. Mr. Glass farther mentioned, as a thing which had been very generally reported, and as much so believed, that colonel Burr had building at Marietta, three gun-boats and a brig of 12 guns, which were to get out as soon as the height of the water would permit; that general Dayton had arrived in Kentucky, with six thousand stand of

arms and clothing ; and that he was in that state at the time of his (Mr. Glass) leaving there.

Mr. Glass likewise informed Mr. Bradford, that colonel Burr, while in Kentucky, generally lived at the house of Mr. John Brackenridge, whose horses he was in the habit of using to transport him from place to place, such as from Mr. Brackenridge's to Nashville.

Taken from the original memorandum, made in presence of James Bradford.

JA: WILKINSON.

(No. 114.)

MEMORANDUM of a conversation held by doctor John Watkins, then mayor of the city of New-Orleans, and speaker of the house of delegates of the territory, to general James Wilkinson, in the month of November, 1806, at the house of James Carrick esq.—Speaking of the rumors in circulation, he observed “It was nonsense to attempt to fortify the city, for if the people expected from above, should come down, the general could not resist them with his regular force, and that he would not find a man to assist him here ; that the flames of revolution were so widely extended, it was not in the power of the government to extinguish them ; and that they deserved it from their imbecility and their connivance at Miranda's expedition ; for that every child in the streets who could lisp, would tell you that they did connive at that expedition ; that we might talk of discontents on the Mississippi, but they were to be found on the Atlantic also.”

Taken from the original memorandum made in New-Orleans, pending Burr's conspiracy.

JA: WILKINSON.

(SACREDLY CONFIDENTIAL.)

(No. 115.)

NATCHEZ, *November 12th*, 1806,

SIR,

I WROTE you from Natchitoches on the 8th instant, by major Porter, who descends with all the artificers and 100 men from that place, to be immediately followed by colonel Cushing, and every other man but one company.

You are surrounded by dangers of which you dream not, and the destruction of the American government is seriously

menaced. The storm will probably burst in New-Orleans, where I shall meet it, and triumph, or perish. The French train of light artillery is indispensable to our defence. I therefore conjure you to aid colonel Freeman, in getting or taking possession of it. Assist him also in procuring picketts to stockade the town, and strengthen the old fortifications. We shall have 1000 regular troops in the city, in three weeks, and I look for succour by sea. I have little confidence in your militia, yet I trust we may find a few patriotic spirits among them. You have spies on your every movement and disposition, and our safety and success depend *vitaly* on the concealment of our intentions. I therefore make this communication in the most solemn confidence, and in the name of our common country, that you do not breathe nor even hint it to the most intimate friend of your bosom. The reserve may be painful, but you must bear it until I see you, which will be in a very few days; and let me intreat you that all your measures may be suspended for my arrival, and that no emotion may be betrayed.

Colonel Freeman's line of conduct has been prescribed to him. I shall leave this place the day after to-morrow, but must dismantle fort Adams, and remove every offensive weapon from it. I fear our government have been surprised—but within six days from the present, the president will be fully apprised of the plot, which implicates thousands; and among them, some of your particular friends, as well as my own. I again solemnly charge you, to hold this communication to your own breast, (excepting colonel Freeman.)

I write in haste, and dispatch this by express. Farewell, and God bless you so long as you may adhere to our country, and co-operate in its defence with

(Signed)

JA: WILKINSON.

N. B. Make no newspaper communication of expected dangers; but say the troops are going into winter quarters in New-Orleans, and that the president has ordered the old fortifications to be repaired.

Governor Claiborne.

(No. 116.)

Extract of a letter from brigadier general Wilkinson, to the honorable James M'Henry, Secretary of War, dated

FORT ST. CLAIR, June 10th, 1797.

SHOULD we be driven to offence, and any operation be pointed against Louisiana, I conceive it would produce

very happy effects, could provision be made for the appointment and levy of one regiment in West Florida, and that province. The French natives of Louisiana, white and black, are hardy and active; the latter are as twenty to one. Two years since they had conspired to cut off the whites: the plan was matured and would have been carried into effect, but for the betrayal of some two or three of the ringleaders. I think too, that the appointment and levy of a regiment in Kentucky, would produce happy consequences. *In such case, general John Adair should have the command; he is a man of military soul.*

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 117.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to the Secretary of War, dated

PITTSBURGH, December 14th, 1797.

“ I WILL state another case to you. On the 4th November 1792, a body of Indians under the Little Turtle, appeared in the afternoon of that day before fort Hamilton, which place I had left in the morning, and captured three soldiers from a working party. I received this intelligence at 11 o'clock P. M. in fort Washington. From the weakness of my force, I had been authorized at that time to call forth one hundred mounted riflemen, who, under a major Adair, were employed in escorting convoys of provision to the head of the line, and were then out on this duty. I instantly wrote to the major; “ Sir, the enemy has appeared this evening at fort Hamilton, and has captured three men, but you are his object, and you must fight before you return. Sergeant major Breck is dispatched with this advice, to warn you of your danger, and I lament it is not in my power to succour you.” This note reached the major the next evening, and on the morning following he was attacked under the walls of fort St. Clair, and although he made a gallant resistance, the enemy being three to one in number, carried their point to plunder his camp, and possessed themselves of his horses. Now sir, in such a case as this, would it have been most laudable in me to have waited the tardy operation of the law for succour, which must have baffled my wishes, or, had time

permitted, to have dashed forward to the relief of this party, with the patriotic and willing strength of the country, wherever I could have found it."

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 118.)

Extract of a letter from general Wilkinson, to general Dearborn, Secretary of War, dated

July 24th, 1803.

"OF all the military officers in Kentucky, general Adair has greatly the advantage. He is moulded by nature for military life; but he is a major-general, and should we ever act together, you must give me a brevet, or he will claim the command, though he has frequently acted under me, once as my aid-de-camp."

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 119.)

RAPIDS OF OHIO, May 12th, 1805, 11 o'clock, A. M.

MY DEAR SIR,

I DID not answer your letter by Taylor, but I did better; I procured him a pension of 20 dollars per month. I was to have introduced my friend Burr to you; but in this I failed by accident. He understands your merits, and *reckons* on you. Prepare to visit me, and I will tell you all. We must have a peep at the unknown world beyond me. I shall want a pair of strong carriage horses, at about 120 dollars each, young and sound, substantial, but not flashy. I am in health; and in spite of the neglect of friends, and the shameful omissions of attorneys, have this day given sir a damper. Perdition overtake the Jew scoundrel; he had nearly destroyed me by a decree, of which I had no intimation, although it is almost seven years old. Enough for the present.

Thine ever,

JA: WILKINSON.

I sail in an hour. Write me private.

General Adair.

(No. 120.)

(CONFIDENTIAL.)

WASHINGTON, *April 5th*, 1807.

I AM desirous, like yourself, to make a snug fixture, and hang up my sword. Our soil, we may thank God, is not favorable to military pursuits; and the profession of arms has become disreputable, in our free and peaceful country. Will you look out for a handsome spot for me, five or six miles from St. Louis, of 1000 acres, more or less, rich, well timbered, and laying well for cultivation, with excellent water, and a mill-seat? I shall want such a spot. Will you have the goodness to look for one without speaking for whom? and if a bargain presents, you may make in your own name, a provisional contract, to be off or on in six months. Pardon the freedom I take with, and the trouble I offer you.

With esteem and respect,
Your obedient servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

Major Bruff.

(No. 121.)

Extract of a letter from general John Adair, senator of the United States from the state of Kentucky, to general Wilkinson, dated

CITY OF WASHINGTON, *December 31st*, 1805.

I HAVE a favor to beg of you, which I am afraid you will think too great; I ask for my own information alone: I wish to know your opinion of the courses and distances that follow. First—how far the Rio Bravo empties into the gulph from the mouth of the Mississippi and New-Orleans, together with the general course: the same as to the River Colorado, and the probable length of these rivers: likewise, the same as to a line which would begin on the gulph between Carecut or Carcase and Armento or Marmento, and run so as to pass between the Adeas and Natchitoches, until it strikes the Red River. I do not expect you to send me any thing like a map of the country, but merely such information as will enable me to form something like a correct opinion, for my own information and satisfaction. I well know your geographical knowledge of that country must be better than any others. Will you likewise mention the distance and course from the mouth of the Ohio to Santa Fee?

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 122.)

Extract of a letter from general John Adair, senator of the United States from the state of Kentucky, to general Wilkinson, dated

CITY OF WASHINGTON, January 27th, 1806.

THE mountain is still in labor, and I have no doubt, will literally verify the adage. The prevailing opinion here, is still on the side of peace. With Spain, we are told all our differences are settled in the *usual way*. France will be our good friend so soon as we obey, promptly, the mandate of general Tureau, and refuse to drink any more of Dessalines' coffee. We have only then to contend with Johnny Bull, and our friend Bonaparte is about settling that business; besides, the whole world must see that we are right, and that the British are wrong, in their construction and interpretation of the law of nations. We have whole volumes wrote and published on our side of the question; the British do not write so much, indeed, but they have one short argument on their side, which our jurists are not very well prepared to rebut—350 armed ships have great weight to enlighten a judge of an admiralty court, and determine a question of right between nations.

You observe to me that I "have seen colonel Burr, and ask me what was his business in the west." Answer: Only to avoid a prosecution in New-York. Now, sir, you will oblige me by answering a question in turn, for I know you can; pray how far is it, and what kind of way from St. Louis to Santa Fee, and from thence to Mexico?

I was informed a few days past, and I believe the information to be correct, that both the ruling parties in New-York have made proposals to colonel Burr, offering to pass a law pardoning all past, and to elect him governor, if he will return. He left this a few days past, for the south, and will return before the session closes; whether he will accede to their proposals or not, I am unable to say.

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 123.)

Extract of a letter from general John Adair, a senator of the United States from the state of Kentucky, to general Wilkinson, dated

CITY OF WASHINGTON, April 17th, 1806.

CONGRESS have agreed to a resolution to adjourn on Monday next; all the important concerns of the nation,

the insults and injuries it has sustained, (as communicated by the president, and clamored from one end of the continent to the other) have been duly attended to and provided for; so have said a large majority. I was not one of that majority, therefore, I was wrong. Two millions of dollars have been appropriated to enable the president to negotiate with foreign powers; by paying this in advance, it is hoped we can purchase the Floridas, and settle all differences with Spain. This the intemperate Mr. Randolph calls buying peace, not from Spain, but from her master, Bonaparte; some others think so too; they must be mistaken. A bill to prevent the importation of certain articles from Great-Britain, after the 15th of November next, it is believed will bring that haughty maritime power to bend her top-sails to us. Thus our wars have all vanished. You may content yourself with governing; you will have no fighting (unless with judge Lucas). A bill came to the senate some time past, declaring that no officer of the army or navy should hold or exercise any civil office or appointment, after the third of July next; this I presume, was intended to give you a relish for entering upon a celebration of the fourth: the senate rejected it. Another has been sent us a few days past, authorizing the judges of the Michigan and Louisiana territories, to make laws with or without the aid of the governor; this bill was taken up in senate yesterday, and drew from your friends some warmth of expression; they considered it as an unwarranted persecution, founded in malice. I was sorry general Samuel Smith was in the chair as president pro tem. he comes out pretty freely on such occasions. The bill was laid to sleep till the first Monday in November next; till which period I presume, the governor may likewise sleep in peace; as it is now too late in the session, *for malice itself to meditate a further attack.*

You have seen in the papers, the attack made by Mr. Randolph on the administration; it is spoken of here as a light thing; my own opinion is that it will grow. An opposition to those in power is generally popular; those who oppose have only to watch the conduct of others; they do not act themselves by which they might be committed. The president has been imprudent in declaring so soon, that he would not be a candidate for the office; it has lost him a great share of influence, derived from patronage. Courtiers already look up to the president in expectancy.

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 124.)

Extract of an intercepted letter from a particular friend, to general John Adair, dated

FRANKFORT, January 15th, 1806.

We have various reports in this state, respecting your business at Orleans; some say Burr has twelve hundred men at Orleans, and that you are to join him there; and after making yourselves masters of the treasury, you are to go on and invade Mexico; but I think you had best collect more men, before you set out on your war expedition. Others say you intend a separation of the Union, and that Burr will then be emperor of the Western country, and you secretary of state; but I always say I know you will not agree to be second in command, that you would rebel first, and if you could not dethrone Burr in any other way, you would blow up his palace with gun-powder. We were told that colonel Burr was met within five miles of Nashville, riding at full speed, and had killed three horses, and said he must see general Jackson before he slept; and that five miles behind him, you was met in a long gallop, your horse almost tired down, (three had already given out with you) that you said you must see Burr before he saw Jackson; that thirty miles behind was met in full chace of you.

True extract,

A. PINKNEY, Cap.

(No. 125.)

NATCHITOCHES, September 28th, 1806.

SIR,

ON the receipt of this, you are to fall down to Fort Stoddert with your whole force, and hold yourself in readiness to offend at a day's warning. Your artillery and ammunition should be examined, prepared, and arranged.

I am, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JA: WILKINSON.

Captain Thomas Swaine, 2d Infantry,

Cantonment near Fort St. Stephen's on the Tombigby river.

*Note....*The main body of the troops under captain Swaine, for the preservation of their health, had been removed from Fort Stoddert, and were hutted near Fort St. Stephens, about forty-five miles above on the Tombigby.

(No. 126.)

NATCHITOCHES, *November 6th, 1806.*

SIR,

YOU are to proceed with the detachment of your command, and the ordnance and stores ordered, with all possible expedition to New-Orleans, and report to lieutenant colonel Freeman, from whom you are to demand and receive whatever you may find necessary to promote the particular service confided to you.

You are to repair, mount, and equip for service, every piece of ordnance, large and small, which you can lay your hands on, and are to work all hands double tides, who understand the business, in fixing shot, shells, grape, cannister and musquet cartridges with buck shot. Let your field pieces be all ready, with horse harness and drag ropes, to take the field; and let six or eight battering cannon be mounted in Fort St. Charles, and the same number in Fort St. Louis, to bear on the river, the front and flanks of the city. In the execution of these orders the utmost economy must be observed, yet no unavoidable expense must be spared.

I entreat you to employ every exertion to reach the point of your destination, where you will find me on the 20th inst.

With respect and esteem,

I am, sir, your, &c.

JA: WILKINSON.

Major Moses Porter, of the artillery.

(No. 127.)

BALTIMORE, *March 15th, 1808.*

DEAR SIR,

ON my return home I waited on Mr. Schrader, to learn from him the conversation that passed between Mr. Thiesen and himself. Mr. S. says that Mr. Thiesen told *him*, that he was in company with Mr. Daniel Clark in Philadelphia, and talking of the affairs of the Western country, observed to him, *Thiesen*, that the people generally in the Western country were favorable to *A. Burr*, and that they would have him, *Burr*, for their president; and to show their contempt for our president, they would give him a salary of fifty thousand dollars.

Yours very respectfully,

(Signed)

R. HIGINBOTHOM.

General James Wilkinson.

(No. 128.)

Interrogatories put to A. H. Thiesen, on the part of general Wilkinson.

1st. Have you ever held conversation with any person respecting the discontents at New-Orleans, the separation of that territory or the Western country from the Union; the election of a president there; that Burr would be the man, and that he would be allowed fifty thousand dollars per annum?

2d. Do you recollect from whom you had this information; was it from some person from New-Orleans; was such conversation or any thing like it, ever held in presence of Daniel Clark, and where was it held, and at what time?

1st. I have heard it stated in the course of conversation, that the inhabitants of New-Orleans were dissatisfied with the government of the United States; that they wished to have a governor of their own; that Mr. Burr would probably be the person elected by them in such a case, and that it was presumable a salary exceeding even that of the president of the United States, would then be annexed to that office.

2d. This conversation I think I heard from gentlemen from New-Orleans, who were in Philadelphia; but as I felt no particular interest in the conversation, and as it passed, in my opinion, about three years ago, it is impossible for me to say from whom it proceeded, nor where it passed. I cannot positively say neither whether Mr. Clark was present or not.

A. H. THIESEN.

Sworn before me the subscriber, a justice of the peace for Baltimore county, on the 16th day of June, 1808.

JOHN AISQUITH.

(No. 129.)

HEAD QUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.

NEW-ORLEANS, *December 7th*, 1806.

SIR,

HAVING received information founded on testimony to my mind satisfactory, that an illegal combination of citizens of the United States, with designs injurious to the interests of their own country, and hostile to our peaceful relations with the Spanish government, has been formed within our limits, of which the plan is to descend the Ohio and Mississippi the latter end of this month; and having reason to believe from the same channel of communication, that the

succour of a British naval armament has been either promised or applied for, to co-operate with and assist the insurgents in their projected illegal enterprize, I deem it my official duty, as commander in chief of the army of the United States, on behalf of the government, to inform you, that such plan is contrary to the laws and constitution of those states, and has been undertaken without the privity or approbation of the government.

With the forces under my command and assembled at this place, I shall exert every endeavor to impede and altogether defeat the enterprize, and I shall to the utmost of my ability, resist any foreign co-operation with the insurgents, either by land or sea.

I have therefore, sir, in the name of my government, to warn you and all the British naval and military officers serving on the West-India station, that any interference on their part or co-operation in such plan, must be considered as highly injurious to the United States, and affecting the present amicable relations which happily prevail between the two nations, and tending to immediate hostilities.

If however, as I have reason to hope (from the known justice of the British nation, and its strict adherence to the great code of law, which regulates the intercourse and conduct of nations) the government of Great-Britain should refuse its countenance and succour to this desperate and illegal enterprize, may I expect that you will, as far as your authority extends, prevent all subjects of his Britannic majesty from fitting out and arming under whatever pretext, any private ship of war, or other force, either of men or vessels to aid or comfort the insurgents, in the unwarrantable design before mentioned. I am sure your excellency must be sensible of the reasonableness of this request, as well upon general principles of national policy, as from a particular consideration of the existing treaties and good understanding subsisting between our respective governments.

I commit this letter to the charge of lieutenant Swan, of the army of the United States, whom I send by an express boat; and with perfect reliance on your good sense and justice, to give the communication its due weight,

I have the honor to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

(Signed)

JA: WILKINSON.

To his excellency the admiral of his Britannic majesty's fleet, commanding on the Jamaica station.

And to the governor and commander in chief of the Island of Jamaica, a copy was transmitted by the same conveyance.

(No. 130.)

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S SHIP VETERAN,

PORT-ROYAL, *January 17th, 1807.*

SIR,

I HAVE received your letter of the 7th December by lieutenant Swan, which, from the stile of menace contained in it, I am at a loss how to answer.

Your excellency may be assured, British ships of war will never be employed on any improper service, and that I shall ever be ready, most cheerfully to obey the orders of my sovereign.

I have the honor to be, with high consideration,

Your excellency's most obedient servant,

JA. R. DACRES,

Vice admiral and commander in chief.

To his excellency general Wilkinson, &c. &c. &c.

New-Orleans.

(No. 131.)

KING'S HOUSE, JAMAICA, *January 19th, 1807.*

SIR,

I DO myself the honor of acknowledging your letter of the 7th ultimo, enclosing the copy of one addressed by you to the vice admiral, commanding the squadron on this station.

I trust, and sincerely believe, that the representation made to you is totally groundless; your letter being the first and only intelligence that has reached me on the subject.

Nobody can more ardently wish than I do, that no cause should occur to interrupt that harmony and close connection now subsisting betwixt our respective governments, the continuance of which is so much to be desired by both.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

EYRE COOTE.

General Wilkinson, &c. &c. &c.







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